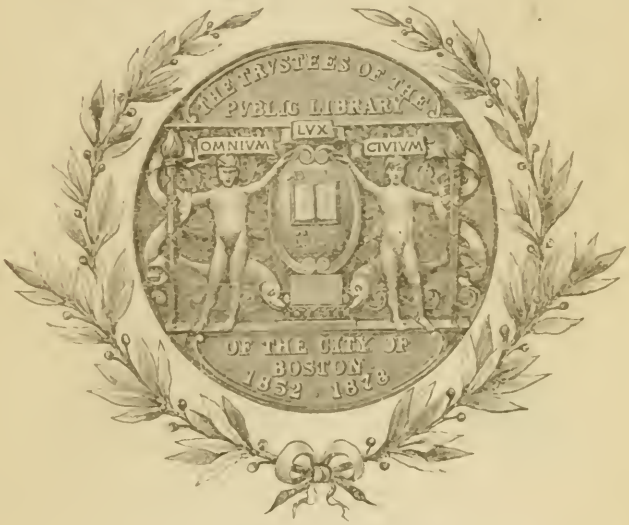
THE CHOSEN VALLEY

MARY·HALLOCK FOOTE

PZ3
No. F739 C



GIVEN BY
Dr Vincent Y. Bowditch

Boston Public Library

Do not write in this book or mark it with pen or pencil. Penalties for so doing are imposed by the Revised Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

This book was issued to the borrower on the date last stamped below.

STACK FOUR

12,3,37: 500M.

By Mary Hallock Foote.

THE LED-HORSE CLAIM. A Romance of a Mining Camp. Illustrated by the Author. 16mo, $1.25; paper, 50 cents.

JOHN BODEWIN'S TESTIMONY. 12mo, $1.50; paper, 50 cents.

THE LAST ASSEMBLY BALL. 16mo, $1.25.

THE CHOSEN VALLEY. 16mo, $1.25.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK.

THE CHOSEN VALLEY

BY

MARY HALLOCK FOOTE

AUTHOR OF "THE LED-HORSE CLAIM," "JOHN BODEWIN'S TESTIMONY," "THE LAST ASSEMBLY BALL," ETC.

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1892

PZ3
.F739C

SHELF NO. 12.197
[illegible] COPY

[illegible] Dec. 31 1918

Copyright, 1892,
By MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.

All rights reserved.

[illegible]

The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Philip reports for Work	1
II.	He is introduced to the Scheme	10
III.	The Children of the Scheme	33
IV.	The Water's Gecking	57
V.	A Conflict of Schools	80
VI.	Capitalists in the Cañon	97
VII.	A Difference of Taste in Jokes	112
VIII.	Alan's Orders	121
IX.	The Oubliette	129
X.	The White Cross	143
XI.	A Touch of Nature	152
XII.	Old Friends and New Allies	172
XIII.	A Bullet with a Billet	190
XIV.	Another Break in the Household	213
XV.	At the Kitchen Door	221
XVI.	Dunsmuir's Price	232
XVII.	A Disingenuous Defense	251
XVIII.	A Broken Tool	264
XIX.	The Irony of Success	285
XX.	The Waters gather	293
XXI.	Dunsmuir's Dam	307

THE CHOSEN VALLEY.

I.

PHILIP REPORTS FOR WORK.

"WHAT is it that you hope to do over there? What is the most you have promised yourself?"

"Why do we always say 'over there'? Is n't it time, if only as a courtesy, we began to call it home?"

"Should I be at home — on the desert plains?"

"You might concede something to the fact that you will soon have a husband and a son there."

"I might concede everything and go myself! But then there would be one reason less, though a poor one, I admit, for your coming back. No; you need not remind me, Philip, that I have nothing left."

Mrs. Norrisson was a pretty, spoiled

mother; one that should have died young and lived in the memory of her charm. She could argue, very logically, from her own predispositions, but she failed in that logic of the heart which enables a woman to feel another's reasons. Nothing could have convinced her, now, that she had not a bitter cause, as the sorrows of women go, even with one who sends a son into battle or gives him up to a fatal choice in marriage. Yet all her grief was that her son had chosen a profession which she called narrow, and elected to practice it in his, in their, native West; while Philip's culpability lay in that he had not revealed to her this purpose as it grew. There had been the natural affection, but never a perfect understanding, between them. If Mrs. Norrisson had guessed this fact before, she knew it now, passionately declaring there is no mystery in life like the being one calls one's child.

Mr. Price Norrisson had married his wife just "off the range," as they say in the cattle countries; sixteen, and the most beautiful girl he had ever met; mixed blood, of course. The marriage was pronounced, in the language of his set, "a good gamble." In the course of her subsequent remarkable

social progress Mrs. Norrisson had left the range far behind. The fields in which she sought distinction lay to the east; and here she would have detained her son, but that some reactionary sentiment in the young man called him back.

Mr. and Mrs. Norrisson had been much apart since the experiment of their marriage began, — he, frankly in pursuit of money; she, of the most enlightened ways of spending it, — and Philip had idealized the parent he saw least of. He was prouder of his father's summons, in the name of his Work, than a young cadet of his first commission in the service of his country; but how commend this enthusiasm to a woman professedly weary of both husband and country?

"I am looking for an engineer," his father's letter ran, "with about what I take your qualification to be, to go on big irrigation work, — an extension of our present system near the town of Norrisson. Don't you think you had better come and see what you can make of it over here? I shall have use for all your science, — you should have got considerable by now, — and I can give you the practical experience no engineer, no American engineer, can afford to dispense

with. Cable me your answer directly. The place can't wait."

Mrs. Norrisson held this letter, folding it and pinching it small, in her delicate, but not generous hands.

"What does he want with an engineer?" she demanded. "A county surveyor is all they need to build what they call their 'ditches.' They are always working against time, and the quality of the work is quite a second matter. Take my word, Philip, your methods will not suit your father. He values nothing but time. He is what they call a driver."

"That, quite possibly, is what I need," Philip answered with provoking humility: "to learn something of that drive, which has done so much over there."

"So much and so badly," the fair renegade retorted. "I don't deny they have pluck; but look at their chances, in a new country where they are first in the field! You 'd think they might afford at least to be honest. But they have the courage of their opportunities. Take the history of their continental railroads, for example. But granting you can keep out of all that, what sort of a school is it for a young man who

has n't finished his education? Your father built a ditch over there — the one that has made Norrisson — not only without consulting a single engineer of reputation, but actually in defiance of a very able one, a sort of partner of his. He stood in his way, and your father got rid of him, because he had a conscience about his work. You need not look at me, my dear, as if I were talking scandal. He will tell you the story himself. He glories in succeeding in just that illogical, immoral way. It is the triumph of makeshift. That is his school of 'practical experience.' They say the country drives them, and they have to keep the pace, somehow, or 'get left.' I don't go into the philosophy of it. I 'm only speaking of its effects. You can see them in me. I was bred in that same school; I got on famously; I could do anything I pleased, up to a certain point. There I stopped. There I have stopped for want of thoroughness in the beginning. I hoped you would be a schoolboy till you were twenty-five, then take five years for travel. By that time you would have been something more than an 'American engineer.' I meant that my son should be a citizen of the world, not a local man in a profession half learned."

"I 'll come back, my dear mother; but a man must choose his field. It strikes me the field for Americans is America; and if the conditions are so different, the sooner I get over there and learn them, the better."

"Who, then, are the Americans? Are you an American? If you are, you get precious little of it from me. My father was an Englishman, my grandmother was a Spanish Creole, — a Californian I suppose you would call her. Why should n't we revert, through these ties in our blood, to the people we come from, — who had something that could be called race? I am convinced it is the homesickness of generations that stirs in me, whenever I fancy myself back in that ugly, raw, indiscriminate region you ask me to call home. I may be homeless, but *that* is not my home."

"Has it ever been suggested that you should call the desert plains your home? Come, at least, as far as San Francisco."

"I might as well be in London, so far as the society of my husband and son is concerned."

"Well, not quite."

"The difference in miles does n't begin to make up for the difference in point of

residence. But it 's not a question of my going back; whether I go or stay, my tastes, my principles, are the same. But for you it will be the turning-point. I am sure that you will commit yourself to something pitiable before the year is out; probably to staying there forever. There 's a fascination about the life, as there is about the first stage of every return to barbarism. When the rope begins to strain, it 's a temptation to reverse the wheel; but is it worth while to send the bucket to the bottom again, after so many turns have brought it nearly to the top? No; you are making a distinct step backward. A man, I have always insisted, should go east for his education, his accent, and his wife. He may go west for his fortune, perhaps; but you do not need a fortune, Philip."

The last word was a plea. But Philip could not forego his retort.

"Because my father has made one for me? Is that a reason I should spend my life in Europe, posing as a citizen of the world?"

"Ah, if you are posing! I thought you were doing something more sincere. But now I see you have never been that. You have taken the way of all men with all

women ; flattering them, conceding everything till the moment of discovery. And then they ask why it is a woman must always make a scene ! — Well, go and be ' foot-loose,' as they say over there ! But don't get beaten, and don't ' get left.' For if you do, your father will lay it all to Europe and to me."

Philip cabled that he would report at the company's office in New York, at once, where he hoped for further orders. He knew that there was such a town as Norrisson, a metropolis of the desert plains, named for his father, who had been the Moses of emigration thither, even to the smiting of the dry hills to furnish forth water for the reclamation of the land. But where lay this field for practical experience, in what precise quarter of his big, native West, he was as ignorant as if he had been born a cockney. He had a mixed idea that the people of Norrisson lived in semi-subterranean dwellings called dugouts ; that their only fuel was sage-brush ; that their sons herded cattle ; and their daughters, phenomenally pretty and ungrammatical, ran barefoot, like the sage-hens, until each married her cowboy, or successful prospector, and became a board-

ing-house belle in San Francisco. These images were mainly derived from his mother's generalizations, — she was a sad recreant to have been born under the Star of Empire, — and from her free use of hyperbole where her feelings were involved. She had a singular aversion to the West, and when she talked of her girlhood there, — a time of unimaginable freedom, by her own account, — it was with a bitterness Philip could only marvel at, seeing that even her distorted descriptions conveyed, in spite of herself, a picture that interested and attracted the listener.

He began his journey in anything but a triumphant humor. He was preoccupied with his mother's disappointment, and some of her arguments stayed with him after the heat of contention had subsided. A half-doubt of his own choice hampered his outlook. It was not till he began to go down the long continental slope, westward from the Port Neuf, far west of the great divide, following the Snake River Valley, and towns and farms gave way, and solitary buttes stood for church steeples, and dusty corrals for lawns and meadows, that he saw his work before him, and began to look forward instead of back.

II.

HE IS INTRODUCED TO THE SCHEME.

Mr. Price Norrisson was at breakfast, eating his first course of iced fruit and going through a pile of newspapers, when Philip made his appearance on the morning after his arrival. The hours of his father's establishment were a shock to his system: he had not thought of breakfast at half past seven. Wong, the Chinese butler, in a white, starched blouse, the sleeves of which fell to the knuckles of his tawny, pointed hands, was making coffee in a Vienna coffee-pot with the solemnity of a priest preparing an oblation. One side of the room was filled with a great array of glass and china, in cupboards built into the wall; the opposite side was devoted chiefly to a huge painting of the Shoshone Falls, the work of a local artist, after a photograph by Jackson of Denver, — such an acquisition as the bored possessor sometimes deprecates by explaining that he took it for a debt. A long window on the

third side, divided into casements, opened upon a grass terrace where a lawn-sprinkler flung its dazzling mist into the sunshine. Outside there was a humming stillness, a perfume of locust-blooms, a breeze that blew freshly into the room, whipping the silk sash-curtains out from the rods, turning up the corners of Mr. Norrisson's newspaper, and tumbling the yellow roses that filled a majolica bowl in the centre of the table.

"You 're about four inches longer than you were when I saw you last," said Mr. Norrisson, measuring his son with his keen, appraising glance. "Don't run to fat much: queer how white everybody looks who 's just out from the East. You ought to have got a Western color on shipboard."

In the next five minutes he had asked Philip a number of questions, rather difficult to answer, about his mother. "She 's still too good an American, I suppose, to be happy out of Europe?"

"'Where it is well with me, there is my country,' is her creed national," said Philip, after a moment's hesitation.

"And how is it with you? Have you got outside of all your national prejudices?"

"I have come home," said Philip.

"Good enough! And what does your mother think of your going to work?"

While Philip fumbled in his memory for a speech of his mother's that would bear repetition, Mr. Norrisson answered the question for himself.

"Did n't expect it, of course. Well, she has been running your education for quite a while, on the European plan; I rather thought it was my turn now. And when I 've set you on your legs it will be your turn. Then you can go back if you want to. But I guess after you 've been two years in the West, with something to do, you won't want to go back. Let me see, how old are you, Philip?"

"Twenty-three, sir."

"You don't say! It 's a fact. You were born the year of the big strike on the Comstock."

"And Phosa must be forty years old!" was the thought Mr. Norrisson did not utter. He was quite used to thinking of himself as a man of fifty odd, with a chest-measure that increased rapidly downward. But Phosa a woman of forty! His slender, narrow-eyed, rose-mouthed gypsy, in whom he had forgiven everything because of her youth! How

could she endure the fact herself? The reflection made him feel more tenderly toward her.

Philip took from his letter-case a photograph, and pushed it across the cloth. Mr. Norrisson took it up and looked at it, fixedly, but without a change of expression. "For me?" he inquired.

"If you like it. It is mine only because I helped myself to it. My mother has her picture taken every now and then; her *journal intime*, she calls the collection. But she is very jealous of its circulation."

"She need n't be afraid, if the others tell no more about her than this one. *I* can't read her journal. This picture does n't even tell her age."

"Neither does her face."

"You better keep it," said Mr. Norrisson, handing back the card, with a confirmed stoical patience in the last look he gave it. "It may tell you more than it does me. I presume you will miss her a good deal. She 's the kind of woman who occupies a man's mind. She did mine, until I found I could n't think about her and do anything else. I don't miss her so much as I used to; I don't let myself."

Mr. Norrisson now began upon the second course of his substantial breakfast — trout from the hills, served in a wreath of cresses, with curly slivers of bacon, and potatoes hashed with cream. Philip was breakfasting Continental fashion, his father eying him disapprovingly.

"I 'm going to take you down the line this morning. You can't ride twenty miles on a roll, a cup of coffee, and a cigarette. Eat something, boy! You don't know when you 'll get your next meal."

Philip fancied that this prompt call for "boots and saddles" might be somewhat in the nature of a test, and was careful not to keep his father waiting, though the horses were brought round at once and he was not dressed for riding. Mr. Norrisson glanced at his son's trousers and faultless foot-gear, and ordered a servant to fit him with a pair of spatterdashes. His "narrow-gauge" hat was exchanged for a grass-cloth helmet, and they set forth.

From time to time, as they rode along, the father cast an eye upon his son's seat in the saddle. At length he spoke of it, approving Philip's readiness to "catch on" to the American way of riding. Philip dis-

claimed the compliment, explaining, with some particularity as to terms, that he had been taught to ride in the French school, which had certain points of resemblance to the American, notably the long stirrup. Mr. Norrisson snorted at the idea of a resemblance; he said that the Americans had no school.

"We ride because we want to get there. A horse is merely an extension of the powers of a man: if a man likes to make a show of himself he can do it better on a horse than on the ground; and that, I take it, is the fundamental principle of the *haute école* in riding."

They were following the lower bank of the irrigation-canal, toward the head-works on the river. The stream which supplied the canal was an uncelebrated tributary of the Snake called the Wallula, fed by melting snows from the mountains, and now at the flood. Every long, hot day set the river roaring, with added volume, at night; and the dry-plains wind, which blows strongest toward morning, like the *terral* of the tropics, augmented the sound of its booming, which could be heard for miles, and might have been mistaken for a distant growl of

surf. The canal was carrying to its full capacity, a guard of men watching it day and night. Mr. Norrisson pointed out to his son that the location at which the main ditch had been taken out of the river was not a particularly good one; a fact which Philip had already noted.

"That ditch had to go through," said his father. "There was only one spot, at the time, for the head-gates. Better risk the patching and propping than let the scheme grow cold on my hands. Here, you see, we had no *garanties d'intérêts*, like your gentlemen of the *Ponts et Chaussées*. We had no security but faith in the ditch. Private capital, if it's non-resident capital, is skittish unless you can show results. Our parties got scared at the outset. We had to give up our scientific lay-out, and build as we could, with what money I could get them to put up. We made a bad job of it, but we made it pay. But there is just where the pride of your foreign engineer knocks him out. We had one of them with us at the start, but he could n't put up with our American methods. It hurt him more to botch the job than to see the whole scheme fall through. He had his professional reputation to look out for; I

had my reputation as a business man. If I undertake to make a deal, I make it; if not on one proposition, then on another; carry it through, somehow, and stop the leaks afterward. We were the original partners in the scheme, Dunsmuir and I. He has got the location that we should have had, only for the split between us. He is canny enough to see that he holds the door to the high line, the only ditch line that can reach the big tracts below, that we can't reach — 300,000 acres of the richest arid land in southern Idaho. We have been freezing him out, you understand. It has taken fifteen years to do it. I brought you over here to be ready for the new scheme that is to take in Dunsmuir, location and all."

"And is Dunsmuir prepared to be absorbed?"

"Bless you, no. It isn't time to close him out yet. You don't like the *vi et armis* method, I see. Well, don't be alarmed. There isn't going to be any fighting, not even in the courts. Dunsmuir's claim is worn pretty thin; but if it came to a tussle between us, the side of a big company is always the unpopular side. Dunsmuir has been laughed at and called a crank these ten

years ; but people have got used to thinking of him, holding on with a bulldog grip, staking every penny he 's got on the game, and year after year of his life — not to speak of the lives of his wife and children. It 's the sort of spectacle that stirs the blood of your true Western man. There is never any sentiment about the rights of a company. It will be a delicate bit of work, I presume, this closing deal with Dunsmuir. I hear that solitude has become a disease with him ; that he 's completely warped, like a stick of timber left out in the sun. He was sound enough once. We might have been of immense service to each other, if he could have brought himself to compromise with that professional conscience of his. But pride before everything ! He had put his name to the first report on the scheme : it should never go through, then, with his consent, but on what he called a sound basis. Of course there were one or two little issues of a personal nature. I 'll tell you the story some time, but the gist of it is just here — Dunsmuir is a sore-headed theorist, and I am a practical man."

They had reached the measuring weir of the main distributing channel, and the talk

plunged into technicalities. Dunsmuir's name was not again mentioned between father and son until that evening, in the summer smoking-room, when Mr. Norrisson returned to the story with evident relish of the opportunity to review it with an intelligent listener. He refrained from making points against Dunsmuir, resting his case honestly, or carelessly, on its merits, such as they were. He did not pretend to be proud of them, but treated the whole entanglement as one of the exigencies arising from a practical man's obligations to his business.

Above their heads, as they talked, a Japanese lantern softly glimmered in its sheath of wrought-bronze filigree; the pattern of the metal screen wavered upon the circle of light cast upon the ceiling, like the shadow of leafy boughs on a moonlit curtain. Mr. Norrisson was seated in a deep, leather chair, one foot resting on the rattan lounge, where Philip was stretched out, looking both sunburned and pale after his first day in the saddle. He was observing his father, and smiling to himself at the contrast that bold masculinity presented to the fair, changeful, feminine type which he was accustomed to watch, in his usual rôle of the lis-

tener. Ugliness in one another has a certain fascination for men, where its signification is power. Philip had seen famous historic heads by the Flemish painters, the prototypes of his father, set off by the ruff, and gold chain, and furred mantle that would have suited Mr. Norrisson's middle-aged development much better than a pongee sack-coat and a linen collar. Yet he understood what an offense this man of broad instincts and hard, vital force might have become, with his sanguine eye and sagging underlid, to the petted, disdainful sensibilities of the wife who for twenty years had contemplated only the points of difference between them.

"I was joking this morning, you know, at the breakfast-table," said Mr. Norrisson, not very explicitly.

"Yes?" Philip inquired.

"When I said it was my turn now. I want you to understand that I have n't interfered to please myself, though I enjoy having my son around as well as any man. It was on your account I called you home. I was afraid she 'd polish away at you till all the bark was off, and then your growth would stop. That was one trouble with Dunsmuir. He 'd been trained up to a cer-

tain size and shape, and he could n't change to fit the circumstances. Dunsmuir was not much above thirty when I first knew him, but he was already an engineer of some distinction. He had done excellent work in India, in charge of one of the divisions of the Lower Ganges canal. He became disgusted with what he considered the gross inequality between the positions of a civil and a royal engineer in the Government corps. I believe there is some room for jealousy in the treatment of the two branches, and Dunsmuir was n't one to pass over a thing like that. When he had served his term he decided to quit the Government service. He had got the colonizing fever, moreover, and was resolved to do something on a large scale over here, making use of his Indian experience to start an arid-land scheme on the colonization plan. I was looking up the subject of irrigation myself; it was the spring of '74, and mining stocks had got a black eye. I made up my mind then that irrigation was going to be the next big boom.

"Dunsmuir was coming down from the Northwest, on horseback, traveling light with a couple of pack-animals and a half-

breed guide. I was on my way across from San Francisco. We met at Winnemucca, where I dropped off the train to wait for the stage. He had got wind of this tract through some old Idaho City miners he struck at Vancouver. I 'd had my eye on it, going back and forth, ever since '60. I happened to know there was a possibility of the U. P. pushing across it, and that the lands must still be open for occupation ; but it was all vague, in the future, with me. He was first on the ground ; but he wanted to go in with some American, because, you know, an alien can't locate a water-right under our government. Well, Dunsmuir turned up that evening, as I was saying, and we sat up talking irrigation till two o'clock in the morning. The result of our talk was that Dunsmuir gave me his spare saddle-horse, and we rode north together. I don't know that I ever had a pleasanter journey. Dunsmuir had a keen eye for a new country ; and like most Englishmen he was a bit of a farmer. He knew soils and climates, and was watching out for the flowers and birds and all the living things of the desert ; and when we rode at night he had the whole map of the stars in his head like an old navi-

gator. Those lands, as we rode across them, two days and two nights, seemed to take hold on his imagination. He saw them with the eye of a dreamer, but he sized 'em up just as coldly as I could. I never was surer in my life that I had got hold of the right man. But when it came to laying out the scheme in detail, I began to get scared. His very success, formerly, in India, was a disadvantage to him. However, I 'm ahead of my story. We agreed to take hold of the scheme together. He wanted me to take it over to the other side and offer it to some of those swell philanthropists, who want room, outside of their estates, for their crowded agricultural population. But I have always had a preference for home capital, when I can get it. However, it was chiefly a question of time with me, and you can't hurry an Englishman. We had various nibbles. I closed finally with the Larimers, a New York loan and mortgage house with agents all over the West. They knew the country pretty well, and were in some of the railroad combinations that were likely to benefit it in the future. They were really anxious to get in here, and they sent out one of their men to look the thing over. He was satisfied,

and they put up fifty thousand to enable us to go on with the work, and hold the right, while they placed the rest of the money.

"Now you 'll notice how Dunsmuir's training got away with him. Here, with no demand as yet for water, he used the same care in laying out his system as in India, in a thickly settled country, on a tail division, where every inch of duty was required. Well, there never were such surveys made in this part of the country as Dunsmuir's — longitudinal sections, and cross sections, and elaborate detailed maps; and everything costing, you know, like the deuce. He put two hundred men on that heavy side-hill work in the cañon, and lined his earth-banks with masonry. Dunsmuir's cry was always that no work is so expensive as cheap work, which has to be done over. I could n't gainsay him on technical grounds; what I did urge was this: put your men below, on the easy part of the line, and you can show our people, when they come out here, ten miles of ditch that will have cost no more than half a mile up there in the cañon. Dunsmuir called this "jockeying" the scheme. The entire ditch below the cañon could be built, he said, in less time than those first

three miles and the headworks. Why, then, should he push forward the lower work merely to let it stand waiting, to its detriment? I had nothing to say but to bring forward my usual doctrine of expediency, which Dunsmuir scorned, both as a man and an engineer.

"It turned out precisely as I expected. Our people were to have come in June, when the country is at its best; they did n't get here till September, when it looks its worst: dust on the plains six inches deep; smoke from fires in the mountains, cutting off the view; hot, and the river sunk to a creek. The miners said they had n't seen it so low for twenty years. Our people doubted that we had even the water we claimed to have. They doubted everything but Dunsmuir's figures, showing what the cañon work was costing. They would n't listen to his averages; it was the big figures that stuck. They proposed to cut down the canal to half its size, covering a portion of the lands first. Later, if the water held out and the settlement demanded it, the canal could be enlarged. Well, you can't imagine Dunsmuir's disgust. We had a battle royal — Dunsmuir's note-books, his Indian experience, his histor-

ical precedents, all his professional artillery and his personal enthusiasm, against their cold, hard, business sense. They were scared, it 's true; but I did n't wonder they were scared. And Dunsmuir would n't go a step to meet them. He had taken offense at their criticism of his economy. Did you ever see a magnificent handler of money who did n't think himself a great economist? He was suspicious, moreover, of their plan of opening the lands for settlement. They talked more about that part of the business than was advisable — to Dunsmuir, at least. They were square men enough, but Dunsmuir thought they meant to squeeze the settlers. Privately, he did n't wish to give them control of the scheme. He told me as much, and urged me to let them go, with what stock their money represented. I knew we could n't afford to play with our chances; and I wanted to unload and be ready for the next thing.

"But, you must know, I had an anchor to windward. While we were waiting, seeing how Dunsmuir was carrying on with the funds, I privately got possession of a little bundle of water-rights down the river; all put together, they represent our present

system. I did n't inform Dunsmuir what I was doing; he would have considered it a sort of potential bad faith, and I did n't wish to take issue with him on any new grounds. We had plenty to discuss as it was. When I saw our big deal growing cold, I showed the Larimers this little pocket-scheme; no rock-work, no masonry, line of ditch directly upon the lands. They liked it. We closed the bargain, and then I offered to go halves with Dunsmuir. Lord, how he did kick! I had been forelaying for the event of failure, he said. I had betrayed our mutual interest for a private deal of my own. He made nothing of my offer to go snacks. A vain show, he called it, offering him a share in a rotten scheme which I well knew his reputation would n't allow him to touch. He called it rotten because we were proposing to raise money on contracts for water which, he said, we could n't supply. Why could n't we? Because we had n't the first elements of a ditch; to begin with, we had no site for our headworks. Very true; but we have made shift to get along without one. He argued that our failure would be a blow to irrigation in this section for years to come. Very true — if we had failed. He could n't

understand that one scheme was no more to me than another. To hear him talk of how I had weakened, you 'd have supposed there was some principle at stake. What the big scheme really meant to him, I 'm not sure that I know. Anyhow, he would n't look at any substitute. He might have gone in with us; he preferred to hold out alone against us. Since then I have treated him as I would any other obstacle to my company's success.

"He built him a house upon his location, as solid as the hill it stands on. I have come to stay, was the idea. He brought his family over, and he raised money on the other side to buy out our interest. I advised our people not to sell, to keep their hold on his scheme. Ultimately, I knew we could freeze him out. Our game has been to let him make his deal, and then quietly come in at the last and be the card too many. The tendency has n't been to increase Dunsmuir's friendship for us."

"How was it, sir, that with your interest in the big canal you did n't wish it to go through?" Philip inquired.

"Our interest was a small one, though with an option of increasing it on certain terms. We should not have had the control-

ling voice in the management; it might have gone against us, conflicting with our own ditch. We wanted the thing to hang in the wind till we were ready to take hold of it ourselves, as we now propose to do, and make the two ditches into one system, under our own management. Then we shall abandon our shifty headgates, and build on Dunsmuir's location, and supply the lower line from the upper one. If Dunsmuir could be approached like any other man, on a business basis, it would be easy enough to compromise; it 's as much to his interest as to ours; but he 's terribly complicated. We 've got to satisfy his science, and his principles, and his pride, and his romantic sentiments, and the bitterness of fifteen years' steady disappointment. It has been hard for him to look on and see us succeed by the very methods he despises. Probably the hardest thing for him to forgive us is the plain truth that we are not so black as he has painted us."

"Possibly that truth is not yet obvious to him."

"Possibly not. In that case it must be painful to him to reflect upon the ways of Providence."

The two men smoked awhile in silence.

"My definition of a theorist," Mr. Norrisson resumed, "is a person who is never satisfied with his own work, nor with anybody else's, not even the works of the Creator. Meet them where you will, they are always obstructionists, injuring other people's chances, coquetting with their own, but terribly soreheaded if they find they 've been left out in the cold. In politics they are Mugwumps; in religion they are no-devil Unitarians; and if they read novels, they only read 'em for the 'truth to life.' No, sir; I 've no use for a theorist — not if he 's a man. Women are born that way sometimes, and can't help themselves."

Mr. Norrisson was in very good spirits. He felt that he had told his story tolerably well and with fairness to the other side, and he was confident that he had carried his son with him. He gave Philip credit for being, as he would have expressed it, "a boy of sense." Philip was certainly impressed. He sat thinking the story over, and was not prepared for the change of subject when his father spoke again.

"Do you think your mother will come home, Philip? What does she say about it?"

"From what she says, I should hardly expect it; but it is n't always safe, you know, to take a woman at her word."

"No," Mr. Norrisson coincided grimly; "I took one at her word some five and twenty years ago, and it was the greatest wrong, it seems, that I could have done her. No," he corrected himself, after a moment; "I took a child's word for a woman's, thinking I could win the woman afterward. And that 's why I forgive her. I took the risks. She did n't know what the risks were. It was n't a square game; but I 've paid the shot, and I 've never complained — more than I 'm complaining now; and I don't say, if it was all to do over again, I should n't take the chances, just the same. What is all the rest of it worth if you can't marry the woman you want? And if you can't make her happy, who knows whether any other man could? Have you always made her happy, Philip? She loves you."

"I am not making her happy now."

"No; but she blames me for it. All her talk about America, you know, means me. If I were in Europe, she would come home."

"I don't think so," said Philip, earnestly; "but of course I don't know. Her very

bitterness seems to me to be a sign there is feeling left. I had not thought of it before, but now it comes to me that she talks about — America as if she were fighting some half-stifled plea for the country she says she deplores."

Both men smiled at the word.

"Well," said Mr. Norrisson, "when she does come back I shall expect to see her out here. She 'deplores' the West, but she was born a Western woman, and she does n't love the East now, you know!"

III.

THE CHILDREN OF THE SCHEME.

BEFORE they separated for the night, Mr. Norrisson planned with Philip a reconnaissance up the line of the "old ditch" to look at Dunsmuir's location. The next day the manager was called away, and it turned out that Philip rode up the ditch-line into Dunsmuir's domains alone. He was told that about three miles above the mouth of the cañon, where it debouches upon the plain, he would come to the "big cut," a spot often chosen by excursionists as a camping-ground. Was the cañon, then, a place much frequented? Philip inquired. At certain seasons, yes; when the young folks went on picnics and riding-parties. Tourists generally took a look at it on account of the lava bluffs that rose, in some places, two hundred feet above the river, to the level of the hill pastures.

"But don't you go foolin' round the house. The old man don't take no stock

in strangers up there on his location, you bet!"

Bearing this in mind, Philip entered the cañon. The bridle-path hugged the shore, winding in and out, amidst dusty sage and willow thickets, and boulders fallen from the bluffs. The first sign of Dunsmuir's occupation was the cabin of the "force," where a purblind mongrel collie barked at him, without crawling from the house shadow where he lay. Half a mile farther on he passed the force itself — two men at work blasting rock on the slope of ancient débris escarped against the bluffs. The sun, declining in a cloudless sky, hung midway between these barriers, heating their vitreous surfaces to the temperature of a brick-kiln. The breeze that faintly puffed and died could be tracked, on its way down the trail, by the dust-pillars whirling before it. It smote Philip in the face, and left him with the sensation of having been exposed to a sand-blast. Across his sight the heat-veins quivered; the river's monotonous ululation drowned the silence — a sound of mocking coolness to a horseman on the blinding trail. Philip saw ahead of him a black notch of shadow, and spurred forward to the shelter of the "big cut."

It was a noble, unroofed gallery, sixty feet across the top and forty feet upon the ground, with floor and slope-walls of cut stone laid in cement; bending in a mathematical curve around the hill, and so averted from the sun. It might have been the hall of approach to a tomb of prehistoric kings. But here the perennial picnicker had made himself at home; broken bottles, tin cans, greasy paper bags desecrated the pavement laid for the tread of waters, which fate and that instrument of fate, Mr. Price Norrisson, had conducted another way.

Philip gave himself up to a moment of frank sentimentality over this good work come to naught. Like the work of many another theorist, it had been in advance of its time. He sat still, breathing his horse, loath to quit the shadow for the glare. More than once he heard the call of a bird, the only voice in the cañon, before its peculiar, indeterminate, yet persistent rhythm took hold upon his ear. It was not the "perfect cadence;" it would have been difficult to repeat, upon any instrument, the first note of the combination, still more the doubtful fragment which followed, dropping down the scale and ceasing suddenly, the final note

wanting. While he waited, came the pure, sad postulate again, unsupported in the sequel; and then the haunting pause. Philip listened, fairly thirsting for the sound, so delicious in the hot silence. Where was it, the poet-bird? Nothing stirred in the dead air of the cut; there was not a leaf, nor a spear of grass, to record that a breath of wind had wandered into it: but the broken utterance came again and again, as if aware of a listener and trying to make itself understood, always with the one word wanting. Nothing came of this lyric pause: Philip rode on reluctantly, and his horse's tread silenced the bird.

By the distance he had come from the mouth of the cañon, he judged the house itself could not be far away; and as the walls of the cut fell back he saw it straight before him, the only house for miles — as distinct in that absolute light as the picture in the small lens of a telescope, yet unreal and dreamlike in its dwarfed proportions because of that very perfection of detail. A long, yellow house of adobe, or plastered brick, with low dormers, scarcely breaking the line of the roof, peering out like saurian eyes into the glare. The roof, sloping outward at

a slight angle, rested on the squat pillars of a massive portico, which shaded the entrance to the house. A side entrance for carriages was through a blind wall, running back like the wall of a court; and beneath the arch of the gateway hung a bell, for announcement or warning. The sun beat upon the dull red roof, projecting the shadows of smokeless chimneys, and emphasizing the dormers with lines of black. The aspect of the place was that of sullen, torpid seclusion. The plateau or bench on which it stood parted the meagre waters of a stream, which trickled down a side-gulch, one of the laterals of the cañon. Small, stunted trees clung to the slope, crouching all one way, as if the wind were ever at their back. A blight had withered the patches of thin grass on top; but up the gulch, following the stream, a double rank of poplars towered, their dark green tops clear cut against the sky, a landmark in that dun country of drought.

Philip concluded that all the water descending from the gulch had been hoarded within the court, for here and there a fruit tree overtopped the wall, or a vine flung a loose spray over it; showing there was a heart of verdure inside that stone shell

which the house presented to a stranger. Scarcely a leaf trembled in the hot, intermittent lull; even the river seemed to hold its breath: then, with a hoarse sigh, the sound bore down again; a sheet of ripples spread, whitening the current, the poplars began to rock and strain, and a flicker of white, like the folds of a thin curtain, blew out of one of the lidless dormers in the roof.

Leaving the cut, the trail made directly toward the house. Philip saw that he could follow it no further without trespassing; but as he proposed to see something more of the cañon, he rode back to the shelter of the cut, tied his horse, and returned to the trail on foot. His plan was, if possible, to gain the top of the bluff, whence he could survey the region and study it as upon a map. He marked where a thicket of wild shrubs flourished, close at the foot of the cañon wall. The water supply which they had "located" was the storage from melted snows, collecting in hollows of the rocks above, that had dripped, or fallen in slender cataracts, down the face of the bluff. Discolored streaks showed where, spring after spring, the muddy overflow had descended. The slope of débris here rose to within fifty feet of the

top, and Philip decided to try this spot for the ascent, trusting to find cracks and foot-holds, caused by the action of the water. His spurs were in his way as a climber, so he took them off, and went light-footed up the talus, as far as the foot of the bluffs. Here, in the shade of a huge buck sage, ablaze with yellow blossoms, he threw himself down to rest. Already his prospect was immensely enlarged; he had gained a cooler stratum of air; he could see the formation of the cañon from end to end, from its rise in the hills to the gate of the river's departure. He could pick out the rocks and shallows in the brown water beneath. Tons of boulders, fallen from the bluffs, lay embedded near shore, breaking the current into swirls and eddies. The river had worn a way down to its present bed, from the level of its former path, through a fissure in the ancient lava flow which once submerged the valley. Such was the word of science respecting its history, a revelation to be classed with visions and dreams of the night. Had Dunsmuir taken counsel of nature, during his fifteen years' waiting, and learned patience in the daily presence of this astounding achievement? Or had he fretted the more for these silent

agencies, witnessing how long, how heart-breaking in their slowness, are those works which endure; how the life of a man is as the frosts of a single season to the accomplishment of one of nature's schemes?

Below the house the river's channel pinched suddenly, and the volume of waters rushed down, with a splendid outward swirl, between two natural rock-piers resembling the abutments of a bridge. This spot Philip accepted at a glance as the famous location. Here, upon this footstool of the bluffs, Dunsmuir had planned to build his dam and waste-gates. The river was to have been raised to the level of the big cut, and its waters transmitted thence, by the high line, to the plains. It was a fine, courageous piece of fancy, from an engineering point of view, and conceived closely within the bounds of practicability; but it was the dream of a potentate with the credit of a nation to back him. Philip saw how alarming it might have been to a few private capitalists, who were not building for fame or for posterity. Yet the dreamer's time had come. The only doubtful issue now remaining was the personal one — upon which men waste their lives. Philip was beginning to

dread it in proportion as his sympathies went out to the man whom his father was quietly encompassing.

Suddenly a hand, unseen, touched the strings of a guitar close to his ear, the sound proceeding from the heart of the wild-sage thicket. Amazed, he sat listening, while a boyish voice shouted out a Spanish chorus, with a most deplorable accent, but in excellent, bold time, to a somewhat timid touch on the guitar : —

> " I love them all, the pretty girls,
> I love them all, both dark and fair."

" Be still a moment ; I thought I heard a step."

The accompaniment broke off, as a softer voice hushed the singer.

" Who could be stepping around here ? "

The chanter began again, but the guitar was silent.

Philip rose up and stared at the tuneful bush. He walked around it, and saw that on both sides its crooked boughs brushed the face of the cliff ; every twig was strung with blossoms of a vivid gypsy yellow ; the whole mass, gilded with sunshine, against the purple blackness of the rock, seemed loudly to defy investigation.

"I am simply positive there is some one," the girl voice exclaimed, low, but so near that Philip started, as if a singing bird had sprung out at his feet. There was silence, and intense curiosity, on both sides of the bush.

Philip peered at its winking blossoms awhile, and then essayed a way between the quickset and the cliff. The springy boughs yielded, transiently; the rock seemed to give way; he caught himself, and stumbled forward into the hidden nest. It was a shallow cave, or pocket, left by the falling of a segment of sheer rock; completely screened from discovery, yet free to every breeze that wandered up the valley. A threadbare rug, a cushion or two of old-fashioned needlework, a few badly used books, a fieldglass such as the stock herders of that region use to pick out their brands at a distance, and the guitar, composed its furniture. The boy singer had started to his feet, and Philip saw that he was crippled in one arm, which was neatly bandaged and carried in a sling. The girl had backed away on the rug, holding the guitar, while with her free hand she improved the arrangement of her skirts. The interruption had evidently been rather

haughtily expected, but in the eyes of the charming pair, as they met his, Philip saw a change of expression, and both began to smile.

"Prospecting for anything in particular?" the boy inquired, in the slipshod speech of the frontier.

"Yes;" said Philip; "for a way out of the cañon without crossing private grounds."

"How far have you followed the trail?"

"Until I came in sight of the stone house at the mouth of the gulch."

"Go ahead, then, till you come to a wire fence on this side of the gulch. Follow it along up, and cross above it, where you see the poplars in the fold of the hills. Or you can go down on the beach and follow that along; only it 's a bad climb back again. Are you for the hills, or the shore?"

"I am for the bluffs. Is it possible to get up from here?"

"Well, not with a horse. You 're not footing it?"

Philip explained that he had left his horse in the shade, below, and was at present exploring the cañon on foot.

The young people took counsel together with their eyes. "There is a way up from

here," said the lad. "It is our short cut to the cave; *we* come down from above. If I show it you, you won't give it away, will you? We don't care to have the mob in here, you know, with their eggshells and paper bags."

Philip agreed to keep the secret of the "short cut" from the mob. The lad moved aside to give him room upon the rug, and the young girl handed him one of the cushions.

Plainly the couple were brother and sister; they might have been twins from the likeness between them, yet the unlikeness was equally strong. Both were gray-eyed blondes. Both were the slender, tawny children of wind and drought. The girl's smooth cheek was toned by the sun to the creamy tint of a meerschaum in the first bloom of coloring. Her single braid of long hair, coiled around her neck like a torque, had broken silver lights that were lovely against the warm, even flesh tones. She had deep-set eyes and dark eyelashes, and here the differences began: for the boy had the prominent eye of a talker; his brows and lashes were reddish gold; his beauty was altogether more striking than the girl's, but also of a commoner type. In his flan-

nel shirt and belt and flowing necktie he might have been the ornamental member of a "Buffalo Bill" troop; while the maiden, seated like a squaw on a blanket, looked a perfect little gentlewoman. Her dress would not be worth mentioning, but that Philip came afterward to know so well the dark blue serge skirt, and the faded silk blouse, with its half-obliterated stripe of pink, and the neat little darns in the sleeves, which were too short, and "drew" a little at the elbows. Everything she had on had been good in its day; all but her shoes, a pair of forlorn little tan-goat buskins, whitened by dust and defaced by the rocks, the like of which Philip had never seen before on such a foot. Under the circumstances he would willingly have foregone the bluffs for the cave, with the very least encouragement, but it seemed to be taken for granted by his young hosts that he was in haste to go.

The youth had remained standing; he now turned toward the leafy tent curtain and looked out.

"There is nothing up there," he conscientiously explained. "Seventy-five miles of bunchgrass, and the mountains, and the cañon, which you can see from here."

"That is quite enough for me," said Philip. "Still, I don't wish to be troublesome. I see you are not very fit for climbing."

"But the climb is nothing at all. We go up a crevice by steps in the rock; it 's no more than climbing a ladder."

"Thanks," said Philip, seeing that he was expected to come to some conclusion. "Is the secret of the short cut mine to keep only, or to use, if I should come this way again?"

He looked at the girl, who had not risen.

"Alan — my brother is master here," she said. "He is very fond of company," she added more encouragingly.

She rose now, showing her height, which was nearly equal to her brother's. Her face seemed childlike in contrast with her woman's growth. Her gray eyes just swept the surface of Philip's delighted gaze, seeming to see no more than that he stood there; but her lips kept back a smile.

Alan called from without, and Philip reluctantly made his exit, as he had come. A few moments later he was roaming with his guide along the top of the bluffs. He saw the circle of mountains, and the seventy-five

miles of summer-dried pasture dipping and rising to meet it. Through the midst the cañon ploughed a great crooked rent. The level light encompassed them; their own shadows were the only ones in sight. The river's voice rose in mightier volume. They felt the first breath of the change, a freshness preluding the down-cañon wind, which sets in, after sunset, toward the hot plains from the mountains.

"My sister has n't a notion that we 've given the key of our back stairs to the son of Mr. Price Norrisson," said Alan, coolly, as he strode through the brittle weeds at Philip's side.

"If you knew me, was there any reason why you should n't have said so?"

"I don't know you, except by sight. You know, perhaps, that I am the son of Robert Dunsmuir."

"Not until this moment; and I 'm sorry if I have come by anything in the way of courtesy which does n't belong to me. Shall I go back and tell her who I am?"

Alan was not sure but that he meant it.

"Oh, that 's all right. I was only laughing at the joke on my sister. I 'm the emancipated one of the family. I don't

hold by any old fossil feud. I don't care whose son you are. I hope I know a gentleman when I see one, though it 's little practice I get in the knowledge. We 're not all scheme-ridden at our house. I go in for a good time."

"And do you mostly get it?" asked Philip.

"Not often; and when I do I have to pay for it, as I 'm doing now."

"Really? You are paying at this moment? That 's perhaps hard on me again."

"This is part of it," and Alan indicated his bandaged arm. "But it 's the least part. Do you happen to be acquainted with any of the boys at Gillespie's horse ranch, in the hills, up the river a mile or so?"

Philip did not know Gillespie's.

"Peter Kountze is the man in charge. My father gave me a horse when I was twelve, and let me ride with the range riders, as they used to send a boy before the mast to cure him of the sea. I was n't cured; and now he thinks I 'm turning cowboy altogether. That 's why it was so unlucky, my getting mixed up in that Pacheco business the other night, when I was out with Peter."

"And what was the 'Pacheco business'?" asked Philip.

"Don't you read the 'Wallula Gazette'? Then, of course, you don't know the locals: who 's in trouble, or who 's skipped, or who 's struck it rich in the Cœur d'Alêne, or whose wife 's got a ten-pound boy, or anything. Well, I 'd got leave to go with Peter to Long Valley to help him round up some cattle. But just this side the bridge, before you get to town, we met up with Sheriff Hanson and his men, out after this Pacheco, who is wanted for a cutting scrape. Sheriff said Peter 'd got to go along, because he knew where Pacheco's girl lived, in the hills back of Cottonwood Gulch. Peter had no objection, only for me. I told him he need n't let that hinder — I 'd take the responsibility; and the boys said, 'Let the kid come along and see the fun.' I say, does this bore you?" Alan had caught his companion's eye wandering to the landscape.

"Far from it. But let us go to the edge, and take it comfortably, with the view below us."

"Like the gods beside their nectar," Alan suggested with his usual "freshness." When they were lying prone in the warm, brittle grass, with their faces over the brink, the

lad went on with his adventure. His speaking voice was like his sister's, deep and sweet, with an odd cadence in it; a voice that atoned for his lazy, corrupted accent. Philip found it very pleasant to listen to him, with the dreamy lights and motionless shadows of the cañon below them.

"We put out into the hills about moonrise. It 's a broken country after you leave the valley. We played hide-and-seek with the moon among the gulches — the little draws, you know, between the hills; Cottonwood is the biggest of 'em. Finally she broke loose from the clouds, and there was the cabin — no light in the window, but the greaser's pony stood puffing by the door, his cinch not loosened; so we knew we had n't long to wait.

"Pacheco heard us s'rounding the house, and some one else heard us too. We did n't count on the girl's taking a hand. She broke us all up, firing on us while Pacheco lit out up the gulch. Peter tried to shove me into the woodpile, but we were n't a man too many. I 'd have looked pretty in the woodpile! They said it was the girl hit me. Pacheco only fired twice; his horse was on the jump, and his shots went wild. If ever

I see that little girl of his, I 'll give her back her bullet. The boys all laughed at me; said she spotted me in the moonlight on purpose. She did n't know what she was aiming at. Every time she fired a shot she gave a screech like a wildcat, and the boys would n't give it her back again because she was a woman. Anyhow, Pacheco got away, and I got into a precious row with my father. They had up the doctor from town, and he joked me; said the whole thing was in the newspaper, names and all. And that did n't help matters. Of course my father blames Peter, and he 's bound I shall cut the whole concern. I won't, because Peter was not to blame. We both lost our tempers, and so it 's gone on. I saw you that evening, in town, and Peter told me about you. 'He ain't much for talk,' Peter says, 'but he 's got a good eye, and he takes in the country same 's a States' horse when you turn him loose on the range.' I 've noticed that. And if I had my pony back, I could show you some country. But I 'm not to have a horse again till I 've promised to quit riding with the boys; and promise I will not. Am I to pass 'em to windward as if they 'd got something that was catching?"

Alan rolled over in the grass and pulled his soft felt hat over his eyes.

"I say, do you come up this way often?"

"I 've never been up before, but I 'm sure I shall want to come again," said Philip.

"I suppose you know all about the row between our governors?"

"I have heard a sketch of it from mine."

"Is he very bitter?"

"You may judge when I tell you there 's no man of this region I so much wish to meet as your father; there is no engineer I would rather work under; and all I know of him I have from my own father."

"You can afford to say those things; you have been out of it, and your father has won. It 's not so easy for us to be good-natured. It is for me, because I don't care about the scheme. I hate this arid-land business; I think it 's a kind of bewitchment, like the Dark Continent or the Polar Sea. Is n't there land enough, with water belonging to it, without spending millions to twist the rivers out of their courses, and make grass grow where God said, 'Let there be a desert'?"

"Are you quite sure that was the word in the beginning in regard to these desert lands?"

"It don't matter," Alan retorted, superior, in his quarrel with fate, both to history and grammar. "It 's enough for me that it 's a desert now. I should let it stay so. My father can build other things besides ditches. Every spring and every fall the work 's going to start up, and I 'm to go away to school; and every spring and every fall it does n't, and here I am. I 've no work; I 've no amusements; I 've nothing to do but loaf and study; and my father will tell you I stick to my books like cobbler's wax to an oil-stone! I 've no friends but the boys, and now they 're put down. It 's no wonder if I kick."

"I hope you are not compromised through me," said Philip, smiling. "You showed me the crevice, it 's true, but the cave I discovered for myself; and I suppose I 've the same right up here as the rest of the mob."

"Ah, you are not the mob. Ditches be hanged! Have n't you been everywhere that I want to go? and seen everything, and had the chance I ought to have had? And yet I can't ask you home to dinner, nor even meet you here, without a hangdog feeling that I 'm keeping something from my father — all on account of that idiotic scheme!"

"Dunsmuir, have you seen a book called the 'Heroes and Martyrs of Invention'?"

"No," said Alan; "not if it was published within twenty years."

"It was; but the heroes and martyrs are considerably older. For the most part, their persistence was the despair of their families, and the ruin of their fortunes, when they had them; but their lives make excellent reading. They were men, like your father, with a tremendous power of affirmation. They had a genius for waiting. Of course there 's a tragic side to the life of every man whose eye is fixed on the future. Do you know the Persian proverb, 'He that rides in the chariot of hope hath poverty for his companion'? It is sad to spend years on those long journeys, trying to overtake the future, but you would not have us all time-servers, men of the present. And when they do arrive, those men of the future, their names are not forgotten; or their works are not, which is better. I wish you were farther away from the scheme" —

"I wish I were," Alan interrupted. "It 's a pity we can't change places, since you seem to fancy riding in hope's chariot, with poverty alongside. I don't. There 's my sister,

come to call me. She 's afraid I 'll cut five o'clock recitations."

The girl stopped beneath the ledge, and looked up at the two faces against the sky.

"Alan, are you coming down?"

"No; I 'm going back the other way."

"Then I will take the books." She pointed toward the way she was going, by the lower trail.

"Dolly!" Alan called her back. "Come closer."

"I can hear you."

"This gentleman" — the announcement was made very distinctly — "is Mr. Philip Norrisson. Mr. — Philip — Norrisson! Do you understand?"

"Why do you shy my name at her as if it were a thing to be dodged? My vanity protests," objected Philip.

"Oh, just to see her stare."

"She does n't believe you."

Philip had been watching the girl's face. She kept her eyes upon her brother.

"You are too silly for anything," she remarked in a conversational tone.

Philip longed to throw her a kiss, in answer to her charming, puzzled, upward gaze. As she turned to go there came the

note of the cañon bird, pealing through the deep cut — the wild, broken song that insisted yet could not explain. She looked up involuntarily, as if asking them to listen. Philip was fain to think that her eyes sought his for sympathy: he could not be sure.

All the way home, in the pink dusk before moonrise, his aroused fancy was at play, constructing a future which should include himself, his work, and the fair children of the cañon; with ever the dreamy cañon lights and shadows attending them, on their way to better acquaintance.

IV.

THE WATER'S GECKING.

Dolly was shelling peas, in the vine-shaded corridor that lined the court. In a hammock close by swung Alan, mechanically conning his lesson, while his eye roved the blue sky field, above the house walls, like a caged bobolink's.

"You have never said one word, good or bad, about young Norrisson." It was Alan who spoke. "And that 's what I call affectation; it stands to reason you must have thought about him."

"Oh, yes," answered Dolly, prudently; "and I have thought of the way you chose to introduce him. Whatever put it into your head?"

"Well, I knew you 'd buck at the name of Norrisson," Alan retorted, in the country slang which was supposed to be objectionable to his sister; "and so I thought I 'd present him at a safe distance."

"Why should you present him? Do you know him, and did he ask it?"

"He knows the family too well for that. I did it just to see you stare; and he 's off my conscience now."

"And on mine; is that what you mean? I don't know why you should feel guilty. Would papa have us less than civil to a stranger asking his way out of the cañon?"

"My father is noted, then, for his hospitality to strangers of the name of Norrisson?"

"Hospitality is quite another thing to answering a civil question. What passed between you on the bluffs you know best yourself, and whether you 've stretched your commission as your father's son."

"Oh, my father's son! Who cares whose son I am? We 're always in some confounded attitude. It 's the fault of all proud, poky families like ours; we ought to mix up more, and be more like other people."

"You talk of the family as if you had founded it."

"I intend to found the American branch of it: and I shall go easy when my time comes; I shall not tie up to the first thing I take hold of. What 's this place to us more than another, so we get a living out of the country?"

"A living! Do you think that your

father could n't get a living, any place but here?"

"He came to get what he calls a living. He came to found an estate in lands for his children, in a country where land is cheap, and men — like himself, for instance — are dear; so he told me himself."

Dolly flushed at the sneer and the flippant tone, while that she could not deny absolutely the truth of her brother's words.

"Very likely; the least of his motives is the one he would put into words. Money-making is a thing even you can understand. It is not to every one he would talk of the greater thing he came for; his chosen work, the nearest to the work of the Creator. Think of that valley as it is now, with a great, useless river bolting through it, carrying away the water that should be the wealth of the land; carrying away gold, too, and hiding it in the black sands. And such an unkind land! Not a tree for miles, nor a little stream, for the poor cattle to stop at, but they must travel till they reach the river: and then to think what it would be in twenty years' time with the water upon it! If it 's glorious to discover new lands, is it less so to make them, out of old waste places

that part one State from another, and add nothing but distance? And all that it means to you is a 'living'!"

"You need n't sling your blank verse at me. I know what ditches can do; but where are they? Where 's this great canal we have been a dog's age building?"

"And what if it were a man's age? Ten acres of land can support one man, so they say; suppose it should take a man his lifetime to turn even one hundred acres of desert into homes for ten poor men. And here is a great province given over to drought!— and your father has spent fifteen years on the borders of it, telling the rich men how good it is, and how the people need it"—

"Not he!" Alan struck in. "He tells them about the dividends."

"How they want it, then. I 'm not claiming it 's a charity; but it 's turning time and money and knowledge and prophecy to as good use as they can be put."

"It 's all very fine, large talk, but we get 'no for'ader.' 'Poor and poorer we maun be;' and the canal is no nearer than it was ten years ago. Dreams, let me tell you, are not filling at the price."

"Yes; you are always keen for the price.

You had better go down to the town and get behind a counter, and then you 'll handle the price of everything, as soon as you part with it, your time in the bargain."

"There are plenty of our name who have stood behind counters before me."

"I 'm not denying it. There is a canny chiel in every family; and there is one that sticks in the lone minorities, and fights for his dream, though it may not fill his stomach. That is our father, bless him! And I love him because he is a mighty dreamer, and a prophet, and a man of faith in more than his pickle money's worth!"

"Dolly, his dream will destroy him. Don't you know that we are beaten? We have been beaten these ten years. Everybody knows it but ourselves. This location is ours, only because no one is ready to take it from us."

"You may say that no one is ready! It 's not so easy to do a thing as to hinder other people. As for being beaten, I 'll believe it when I hear it from papa. Alan, lad, what hurts me is: here Mr. Price Norrisson has got his son home from Europe to help him in his schemes, so Margaret says; and where is our father's son? Casting eyes on

the winning side, and crying that we are beaten!"

"My father's son is here, thank you, staked out in the sage-brush," Alan retorted sulkily; "and I 'd like to know how much help Philip Norrisson could give his father, now, if he 'd had my chances and no more."

"Bless me! the chances you talk of cost money, and I never yet heard of a son that called himself injured because his father was not so rich as some others. If our father cannot afford to buy us our teaching he can give it us, and more than we seem likely to 'get away with,' as you say. By the time you are where papa cannot help you, Alan, lad, I think there 'll be money enough to send you to school."

"Well, I wish you would n't 'Alan, lad' me. It 's well enough for Margaret, who has nothing but the Scotch; but ladies —"

"Yes; Margaret would smile to hear you talk of ladies — that nursed you on her knees and taught you to spell the word. It was when you got beyond Margaret's teaching that you went to learn English of the cowboys, I dare say."

The morning sun was creeping up the wall of the south corridor; it chased Alan out of the hammock to the step by Dolly's side.

Having come to a knotty place in his Ovid, he was not above asking help of his sister. Dolly brushed back the locks, of cobweb fineness, that clung to her warm forehead, using the back of her hand, her fingers being damp and ruddy with pinching the dewy pea-pods. She leaned over the book without touching it; then changed her mind, and drew back.

"Are we beaten?" she asked defiantly. "Do you say it of your own knowledge?"

"How should I know? I know how the talk goes."

"Oh, the talk! The talk is nothing; 'kintra clatter.'"

Dunsmuir had sunk in his scheme all that he had put into it, save his children and two faithful friends; plain, poor people, staple products of the older countries, proved by every form of discipline known to the new. Job Dutton was a transplanted New Englander from the Western Reserve, the last foreman left on the work from the siftings of years. Margaret, his wife, had come to the cañon as nursemaid to Mrs. Dunsmuir's children. After the lady's death there had been unfortunate insinuations, conveyed in emotional letters — those unconscious vessels of

wrath — from her people in Scotland to Dunsmuir, sore with his grief. These he understood to intimate that his wife had been sacrificed to his scheme. Later, the family undertook to show him his duty to his children. Dunsmuir declined the interference, and refused to send his babies home; and so the cañon kept them, and Margaret with them. The cañon was responsible for Margaret's marriage, and Job's further entanglement thereby with Dunsmuir's fortunes: for Margaret would not leave the children; the question was never raised between husband and wife, and every year they gave to the cañon life made it harder to break away.

Dunsmuir alone of the household knew its full indebtedness to the cabin; and he fearlessly accepted the obligation, as one who is generous himself and confident of his ability to straighten the account. Nor is it likely he could escape from the inbred conviction that it must be a privilege for persons of Margaret's class to be connected, in service, with persons of his own, with or without remuneration. It is a sentiment that dies hard, in the blood of those accustomed to be served; which many pleasing illusions and

traditions help to keep alive, even in new countries, where it is imported under conditions often curiously the reverse of feudal.

As the master's income was eaten up by the scheme, sacrifices had to be made, and as a matter of course it was the women who made them, and thought little of it. Since Dolly had gained her growth she had been dressed in the simplest of her mother's gowns, made over to fit her transatlantic slenderness; the grand ones were locked away, upstairs, in sweet-scented towels and layers and stuffings of tissue paper, in the brass-bound trunks with foreign labels, for Dolly's use should she ever come to the full responsibilities of a young lady's toilet. It was a great satisfaction to Margaret to feel that these were had in reserve. She herself wore sacks and skirts and aprons, chiefly, and thanked the Lord that summer was long in that land, and hoarded her stuff gowns, and was never known to have a new bonnet, and washed the table linen tenderly, and was jealous of the winds that flapped and twisted it on the lines. But Dunsmuir had his wine and his black coffee at dinner, and his loaf-sugar and lemons, with something stronger, at bedtime, — which time with him was any-

where between midnight and two in the morning; those bright, electric nights of summer were ill for sleeping, — and his pipe was seldom cold, and was fragrant, always, of the best "mixture." He knew not how to economize in small details, and was not young enough to learn; but in a total deficit he could have gone without and never would have complained. He owned his weakness when Margaret sternly returned to his wardrobe garments which he had prodigally bestowed upon Job; he put them on again and wore them, in a spirit of manly acquiescence in matters beyond his knowledge, not to say control. Margaret counted the silk handkerchiefs that were spared him as if they had been bank-notes, and his shirts and socks lasted in a way that was miraculous to Dunsmuir, who never looked to trace their history through a pathetic extension of darns. Had it not been for the hard wear on his clothes Margaret would sooner have seen him "howkin' stane" on the hillside with the men, than wearing out his heart over such "toys" as he mostly filled his time withal.

Hearts outlast the coats that cover them, and Dunsmuir's heart was yet strong in hope. But the sickening inertia of his life,

the long tale of disappointment, was beginning to tell upon him. His temper was giving; he was weary of marking time; the dry summers bred in him a low fever that wasted his flesh, and quickened his pulse, and kept him thrashing about in his bed at night; and the river's mounting cry, borne past his window on the gulch wind, woke the echoes of all the sorrows he had ever known.

To-night, as usual, Dolly prepared her father's tray for his bedtime refreshment. Its place was on the corner table by the cupboard in his study. Margaret never broke anything, and the same cut-glass tumbler Dunsmuir had mixed his toddy in, the first summer in the cañon, was still the one he used. Then she looked into the cupboard to see if the Wedgwood biscuit-jar needed replenishing; screwed down the lamp a trifle, secured the flapping bamboo shades against gusts and night insects, and went out to seek her father to bid him good-night.

A soft but mighty wind was blowing, under the bright stars that sparkled in the dark, cloudless heavens as if a snapping frost cleared the air. A November night to look at — the blanched crispness on the

blasted grass, the sharp dartle of the stars — but the gale blew out of the warm south-west. Dolly took it full on her bare throat and welcomed it, and lifted her arms to feel it stroke them where her thin sleeves slipped back. Behind her a great co-radiant light spread upward from the bluffs, announcing the majesty of the moon. All the way she went, along the pallid drifts of sand, to find her father. He might, and generally did, accept her good-night kiss mechanically, but he would miss it, she knew, should it fail to come. She found him in a little cove, where the shrunken brook came down over the stones with a monotonous, vapid murmur. He lay in a trough of the sand, listening to the mingled tale of waters, "like a sick man counting his own pulse," thought Dolly; and as she looked she felt a very mother to him.

"Good-night, father dear," she chanted, while yet she was a little way off; she knew he never liked to be surprised in his silent fits. Instead of answering, he sat up, opened one wing of his sand-cloak, and signed to her to sit beside him.

"What is Alan's business down the trail this time of night?" he asked her.

"He went with the newspapers for the men. I forgot to give them to Margaret."

"Is there any need of his staying so?"

"Oh, they just delight to have him; and it 's Saturday night."

"He 's keeping them out of their beds. But how should he know, that never did a day's work in his life, when bedtime comes to a man who 's been up since five?"

"It 's not quite altogether Alan's fault, is it, papa, that he has not enough to do?" Dolly offered.

Dunsmuir kicked the plaid from his feet.

"Not enough to do? Where are his books? He has enough to do there, I think. But no; the book of the range is Alan's study, with a cowboy for his tutor. He 'd sooner be able to pick up his hat from the ground at a gallop, than take a stool in the first engineering house in London."

"I did not know there was any such place waiting for him," said Dolly, with deep simplicity.

"And if there were he is not fit for it. Let him first do well, or fairly well, at home. Where 's the responsibility he has been tried with that he has n't refused, from fetching the wood for my office fire, which he never

did faithfully for one week at a time! No, I will not take shame to myself; child or parent, each must 'dree his ain weird.' The cañon has not hurt my girl."

Dunsmuir drew his daughter to him with an absent-minded caress. His loquacity sat strangely on him, for as a rule he was a silent man in his thoughts. She shrank from being a party to this discussion of her brother's faults, and after a little she ventured to change the subject.

"What does Margaret mean when she talks of your saving their homestead? How saved it?"

"I never saved their land. Good faith! It 's little they 've ever saved through me."

"Well, you did something: it was something about taxes, by Margaret's way of it."

"Taxes, to be sure. Why, Job missed his reckoning, somehow, and the taxes went by default. They 've a curious, inconsequent way, here, of collecting them. The claim was advertised in process of law, but Job did not see the newspaper. I happened by as the land was being cried at the court-house steps, and paid the tax, as any man would. They could have redeemed it afterward, had they been posted on the law: and I should

have seen to that. Margaret's gratitude is the simplest thing about her."

"It would seem she likes to think you saved it; she has it over and over. Latterly she is always harping."

"And do you know why? To spare your pride, should you come to know they are trusting me for the best part of their wages, these two years. I have paid them as I could, a little from time to time to keep the pot boiling, and they have scraped a little off their ranch, one way and another. But there 's where it is; Margaret will not have us beholden, so she makes out there 's a debt on their side, to offset what we are owing them.

"It need not hurt you to know it now," Dunsmuir added gently, seeing that Dolly was more troubled even than she was touched by the ingenuity of Margaret's devotion. "These sore matters will soon be straightened. We 'll all get our pay before long. It 's a pity, though, since you speak of land, that Job took up his desert section four years ago this summer, when, as I thought, the scheme was ripe. The land is forfeit now; nobody has touched it, but it will be covered with filings as soon as word gets out

the canal is to go through. It was by my advice he used his right. It is a fortune lost. And I dare say they never speak of it, even to each other. They 're honest, worthy folk. I 'd like to see them get the worth of their waiting. But what comes to one comes to all."

Dolly listened, but without the expected enthusiasm. She had heard such prophecies before. About every third year, as far back as her young remembrance went, the scheme had culminated, and always at this season, which was also the anniversary of the family's greatest sorrow. Dunsmuir's hopes had risen with the floods and waned as the river sank in its bed. The strain of these summers had been followed by dumb, dogged winters, spent between the study and the "quarter-deck," as the children called the long, windy portico facing the river, where their father walked out his moods alone. Every day he would tramp down to the cabin to "count the force," as he said; "the force" consisting of Job and three men more. By spring he would come out of himself, white and worn; sort his garden-seeds, trim his rosebushes, and drive a little harder with the lessons, a sign by which the children knew

when there was an inward rising to be quelled. Debarred of his own work, the man loved to see things move where he had power to make them. It was fortunate for Dolly that Alan balked at his lessons; she would have gone far beyond her strength to please her father; but she hung back, not to exhibit too great a distance between Alan and herself. When it was dead low water with Dunsmuir's hopes there was never a word said about the scheme, and Margaret was as tender to him as to a sick man under the doctor's sentence.

"At last!" he breathed, with the sigh of one who feels the screws relax. He turned his face toward the notch in the cañon wall, where the light of the west looked in: —

> "'Yes; hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
> And I be undeluded, unbetrayed.'"

"I dread to hear you speak it," pleaded Dolly. "If the door is open at last, let us creep through softly, and not boast we are free. I am afraid" —

Her father turned to look at her. "Ah!" she cried, "hear that!"

The climbing waters broke with a crash on the bar; the current, racing down, hurled them bodily through the sounding strait.

Out of the darkness and clamor came a small, cold, mocking laugh, distinctly syllabled, repeated on one note, but devoid of human expression. It was like a cold touch laid upon the spine.

"Come, come, you hear the water clapping in the breach. You 'll hear it any night when the river is up, and the wind carries this way. Do you think it is the kelpie? We are after none of her secrets."

"But I hate it. Whatever it is, I wish it would hush."

"We will cry it hush, come high water another year. When the rife river heads into a lake, and leans its breast against the scarp of the dam, you will hear no more of the water's gecking. The kelpie 'll be closed out, and so will the wearifu' crew of cacklers that cry 'Crank!' and 'Dreamer!' when a man is doing his best, and mostly failing at it. There, we need not speak of it. The worst of a long, slow fight is the bitterness it breeds."

His thoughts must have crowded hard upon him, for he checked himself, like one who feels that he has spoken overmuch. He took his daughter's hand and passed it gently over his face; from the steep forehead

over the bony brow and sunken eyelid, down the cheek and over his mouth, breathing its softness as one inhales the cool virtue of a rose.

Tears gathered in Dolly's eyes. She made no secret of wiping them away. She loosened the beads that clung to her warm neck and choked her.

"Why do you cry, Dolly? I should be glad to see you take good news more simply. It comes late for some of us, but not for you and Alan. Can you not believe it?"

"I believe it, father, but I do not see it, nor feel it, yet."

"That is quite natural. Well, shall we go up now? See, the moon has swung out like a great ship from port; her course lies clear before her. God knows I am thankful this work is to be finished. I have been cruelly hampered in it."

"I knew it was for the work," said Dolly, proudly. "Some have said it was for a great fortune you have stayed here so long."

"Eh, you think your father should be above such toys as fortune-seeking? Well, there you are grandly mistaken. I am no philanthropist, and I am a man that needs money. But what matters a reason here or

there? — romance it as you will. The man himself is his own best reason for what he does; and when the thing succeeds, all can see why he was bent on doing it."

"And if it fail?"

"There is no such word, my dear. Good work can wait; it never fails."

Dolly sighed tremulously. "I wish you *would* tell me why you have waited all these years. It could not have been just for money."

"Why have I waited?" he mused, with head erect and dreamy eye. "He that sees us as we are, our prideful mistakes and pitiful victories, kens why, and at what cost."

"May I ask you just this?" the girl persisted; "would you have kept on just the same had you known —"

"Ask me nothing! I gave up thinking years ago. I put my hand to the plough; the share cut deep, the furrow was long, and we are nearing the end of it. May God prosper the harvest!"

He took her by the shoulders, and shook her, and kissed her hard. Dolly laughed, with the tears in her eyes. They went up the hill together, she with her arm under her father's, trying to keep step with his long,

unheeding stride. On the crest the wind caught them. Dunsmuir opened his plaid and folded Dolly in it; the rowdy blast strained it tight. At the study door he took her by the pinioned arms and lifted her over the sill, setting her down again with a mighty hug. He was gay as a boy. Dolly trembled for him, he seemed so exaltedly, perilously secure.

"Well, what is it?" he asked presently, seeing that she hung about his room, looking as if she had something still on her mind. "As well out with it now as any time."

"Would you mind showing me the letter? I 'd like so much to see the very words."

Dunsmuir smiled in the negative. "I have no right to show you a letter which relates to other people's business," he said. "And you would not understand the half of it. One thing I may tell you: they will send over a man to search the water-right, but there will be no expert examination of the scheme. They have looked up my record, and are satisfied that I am competent to pronounce on it, and that nothing will be misrepresented."

"You will like to work for those people!"

said Dolly, beaming. "But others have come to look at the scheme, have they not?"

"Several persons."

"Why was it nothing came of those visits?"

"O ye of little faith! Generally speaking, a sinister little cloud has appeared, no bigger than a man's hand, the hand of Price Norrisson — may the Lord find better work for him than meddling with me! I have said I would never forgive him till he stood out of my sunlight. But these are not matters for you to take to bed with you. Remember, there comes a time when the best word is the word to hold by."

Betwixt happiness and doubt Dolly lay awake long, and heard Alan's feet, about eleven o'clock, pounding on the sod past her bedroom window. At the same moment, from over the gulch, came Modoc's short, excited neigh, — his call to Alan when his blood was up. It was not likely that Alan had been all this while at the cabin, thought Dolly; the conviction startled her that he had been racing over the hills on Modoc, reckless of his father's express conditions. Alan tried one and another of the rear doors; all were closed for the night. He

then went around the house, quietly, to the front door. Dolly heard her father's voice in sharp tones of challenge and inquiry, followed by Alan's low, sullen replies.

She sat up in bed and rocked herself to and fro, in misery for them both.

V.

A CONFLICT OF SCHOOLS.

A TELEGRAM from Mr. Norrisson, awaiting Philip on his return from the cañon, announced the manager's return by train that night, bringing guests for whom rooms were to be prepared. The prompt wording of the dispatch was like the click of a latchkey preceding his father's stamp in the hall. In his sleep that night he felt the hot breath of the cañon wind again upon his sunburned face. He sighed and tossed, and presently he was forcing his horse up those tottering rock-slides, slipping and falling, with a din of waters in his ears. Again it was along the brink of the bluffs he picked his way, and woke with a strong start as the footing dropped off and left him facing an abyss, the booming of the river confusing his senses. Later in the night he labored through a conversation with Alan that he felt to be critical, yet in which he was singularly helpless to say the right word. He attempted a com-

parative analysis of the genius of their respective fathers; he gave Alan good advice, and promised to assist him in his studies; to all of which Dolly seemed to listen, with sweet eyes of approval lingering in his.

Great was Philip's relief, on waking, to find that none of these utterances were actually on record against him; yet he was loath to part with those tender dream-glances which the unconscious Dolly had given him, in the lawless travesty of sleep.

The air had changed to the chill of early morning. Carriages were rolling through the streets; one stopped, and Philip heard hushed sounds of an arrival in some distant part of the house. It was after this that he fell into his first deep slumber, which held him long past the breakfast hour. He was introduced to his father's guests only as the carriage drove up to take the party, including Mr. Norrisson, away; where, or for how long, Philip was not informed.

"Does my father give a dinner to-night?" he asked, chancing toward evening to pass through the dining-room, where Wong, in full starched panoply, was laying the table for six.

"Little dinner. Not muchee people. Two lady."

"What time dinner?"

"Same time. Ha' pa' six."

"You will take in Miss Summercamp," Mr. Norrisson posted Philip, in the library, where they met before dinner. "She is a very pretty girl, though, I suspect, a trifle spoiled. The Summercamps have had hard luck with their children: this is the last one of five, and it 's a pity, for there is plenty of money."

"Have I heard you speak of the Summercamps before?"

"Possibly not. The ladies came in with us last night; they are stopping at the Transcontinental. Summercamp wants to go in on the new scheme, and his wife and daughter will take up a desert section apiece."

"Under Dunsmuir's ditch?" Philip inquired, surprised at the progress affairs were making.

"Under *our* ditch. We shall have the contractors here next week, or week after, to look over the work. The estimates must be ready for them. I must have a talk with you about that."

"And how have you managed with Dunsmuir?"

"Have n't approached him yet, directly. Our man in London has seen the people Dunsmuir has been working with. He had got things in very good shape; but our man put them on to the situation here, and they have concluded they don't want to buy a fight. It is the game we have worked before; but Dunsmuir has never before been so near the close of a bargain. It will cinch him, I expect. These men are his own crowd. He will never get a better hearing, and he knows it. When he 's had time to think over their alternative, we will step in with an offer which he 'll be forced to take. He has banked on this scheme about as long as he can. There 's nothing left but the personal pull, on men that he has n't paid; and, if I 'm not mistaken, Dunsmuir 's too proud a man to try to make that go."

Messrs. Leete and Maynard entered the room, and Philip heard no more, at the time, of his father's strategy.

The ladies were unfeignedly late. They had spent half an hour, they said, beating the dust from their traveling dresses, to make themselves tolerably fit for a dinner table. Both, in a breath, began praising the house — "Such a lovely house to be wasted on a couple of men!"

"Planned and built and furnished by men, Mrs. Summercamp," Mr. Norrisson retorted.

"Ah, but when you plan and build and furnish for yourselves, do you do it like this? You need not tell me there is no Mrs. Norrisson!"

Mrs. Summercamp approached her host on his domestic side with the fearlessness of a woman happy in her own relations.

"I hear there is a very charming Mrs. Norrisson," Mr. Maynard interposed, with flattering emphasis.

"There is," said that lady's husband, imperturbably; "but she looks upon this house as a sort of caravansary, for the convenience of first-class tourists, like yourselves. It 's rather too far inland to suit her."

"But she comes sometimes?"

"Well — she is waiting till we get rid of the smoke of the sage-brush bonfires."

"Why, I don't think it is at all noticeable," said Mrs. Summercamp, amiably surprised at this novel objection to the country. "Is it considered unhealthy?" There was a general laugh, and Mr. Norrisson admitted that he had been somewhat figurative in his reference to the virgin crop of the desert.

The dinner went forward as the dinners of a man of experience do. It was a trifle too elaborate, perhaps, but it suited the house and the host, and the ladies frankly enjoyed the display in their honor. The men discussed locations for water power on the line of the new canal, probable town sites and railroad stations, and joked the ladies about their artless behavior in the land office, when asked to declare their intentions as desert settlers. The four travelers appeared to be old friends and to know one another's plans. There were frequent references to Mr. Summercamp as "pa'pa," in a style of easy comradeship, and Miss Summercamp openly guyed her mother, with fond impertinence, as if they were girls of one age. She was a pretty little coquette, with large dark eyes, deceptively solemn. She looked scarcely more than sixteen, whereas in the land office she had calmly sworn to twenty-five.

"I hope we shall have a nice day to-morrow for our picnic," she remarked to Philip.

He inquired, with polite interest, where the picnic was to be.

"Now, Mr. Norrisson," exclaimed Miss Summercamp, turning from Philip to his father, "what sort of an arrangèment is this

you have been putting up on us? Here is your son perfectly unconscious there 's to be a picnic, still less that he 's expected to take care of us, and show us the way!"

"My dear young lady, my son was not on hand this morning in time to go with us to look at the lands; and so he was n't aware there were any charming desert settlers in the party, and could n't offer his own services; so I did what I hold to be a father's duty — put in his bid for him. Was n't that right? I 'll own it was bad of me to forget to tell him this evening before you arrived; but in the matter of the invitation my conscience is clear. Consider how seldom such chances occur! Is a poor young fellow to be knocked out because he happens to oversleep himself? Not while he has a father to look out for him."

"Well, I consider the whole business canceled from this moment," cried Miss Summercamp. "I don't accept invitations by proxy."

"As a trifling matter of fact, Estelle, it was your mother who accepted," suggested quiet Mr. Leete.

"Well, mamma may go if she chooses, but she will have to leave her daughter be-

hind. Mr. Norrisson has trifled with my vanity in a way that can't be overlooked."

Philip submitted, with all due gratitude to his father, that his own vanity was in a more trampled condition than even Miss Summercamp's; and proposed the picnic should start afresh, with invitations at first hand.

"Now you 're talkin'," said the young lady, lightly dropping into slang; "but remember, the place must be the same. I don't know that anybody has mentioned that we are going to a place in a cañon called Dunsmuir's Location."

Nobody had, and Philip, taken by surprise, could not at once conceal his consternation; the cañon being the last place where he would have chosen to exhibit himself as Miss Summercamp's vassal, even of a summer's day. The idea struck him as a sort of comical profanation. "Behold the victim writhe," said she. "He can't hide his sufferings now the thing begins to look as if there was no getting out of it."

Neither could the young lady altogether hide the note of vexation in her voice. Her mother looked uncomfortable; and Mr. Norrisson tactfully turned to her with some commonplace about the next day's arrangements,

taking it for granted that all was going forward as before.

Miss Summercamp quickly recovered herself, and graciously accepted Philip's offer to go with the party in the impersonal character of driver, since she would put no faith in his professions as a cavalier. The ladies took an early leave, escorted by their friends, who had telegrams to send out that night. The father and son were alone in the library, smoking their bedtime cigars.

"You must be tired," said Philip, observing the change in his father's features, from which the society smile had vanished, as a frugal host puts out the extra lights when the hall door closes upon company.

Mr. Norrisson passed over the remark with the abrupt question: "You were up the river yesterday, I hear, to look at the location?"

"I saw it, from a distance."

"It shows what it is — a natural dam site, rock bottom and all."

"Is it known whether the rock bottom is continuous?" asked Philip. "There is one spot, in the middle, where the water boils up in a curious way. How does it look when the river is low?"

"The river is never so low, over that spot, nor so quiet, that you can see what the channel bed is made of. Dunsmuir was never satisfied on that point. There was another — the capacity of the waste weir. In every other particular his design for the head-works was complete. I have copies of his plans and drawings for the works. I wish you would look them over now, pretty soon, and, if you like his design, carry it out; and I 'll give you help about working up the specifications. Or, if you can improve on it, why, of course we want the latest advices. Engineering must have advanced some since Dunsmuir laid out his scheme."

"Do you mean, sir," asked Philip, in sheer amazement, "that you expect me to take charge of the building of the head-works in the cañon?"

"Certainly. What did you suppose I brought you over here for? To carry a chain?"

"But that is work for an engineer-in-chief of the first class; and I should not rank, on the government corps, above the grade of *ingénieur ordinaire!*"

"You are not working for the French government; you are working for me. You

will have my advice in practice, and my knowledge of organization to help you, and I shall give you as good a consulting engineer as the country affords. I must have an engineer who will push things as I want him to — no buts, and ifs, and cheeky conditions. The conditions of this scheme nobody is going to dictate but myself. They are matters of finance first, and engineering afterward."

Philip was aware from a certain violence of manner that his father was arguing on a sore point, one on which he had learned to expect opposition. He got up from the table, where he felt cramped under observation, and went over to the fireplace. It was decorated with a mass of yellow and white azaleas in a blue Leeds pot, within the tiled jambs; the whole darkly reflected in the black marble hearth-slab. Philip stooped and picked up a petal that had fallen, rolling it in his cold fingers as he talked.

"I should have supposed that Dunsmuir would build the head-works. No one could carry out his plans so well as himself; and by this time he must have the facts he needed: he must have tabulated the river's rise and fall for every season he has watched

it, and sounded every inch of the bottom. Those two points you speak of are the vital points in construction, I need not remind you. If time is an object, Dunsmuir has had plenty of it. No one, not the best man in the profession, could come in here and decide those two points offhand."

"We need not discuss Dunsmuir's place on the work, my son. He is not going on it at all in a position of authority. That shall be my first condition when we come to terms on the compromise. I can't work with Dunsmuir. I could n't when he was fifteen years younger and suppler than he is now. If you are in charge I expect you will defer on practical questions to the manager, and on technical ones the manager will defer to you; but the practical questions shall come first."

"I should call the size of the waste weir, in a country without records of rainfall, a practical question of the first magnitude in the building of a dam."

"There *are* records — just as good as public records; only Dunsmuir would never take any man's word for a fact unless he knew him to be a trained specialist in that particular line of observation. I can find

plenty of old miners and log drivers, up and down this river, who can give you the average flood discharge of the Wallula for the last twenty-five years just as close as you could come to it with your scientific apparatus. Talk of training! Have n't they got eyes and ears, those fellows, trained like the beavers and the muskrats? Don't they stay on top of the earth by using the faculties nature gave them? When *they* make a mistake the penalty is death."

"Still, as a matter of experience," said Philip, pleased, but not moved, by his father's rhetoric, "testimony of that sort has not always been found trustworthy."

"Always, no; no testimony is always trustworthy."

"I find here among your blue-books a case in point, the chief engineer's report on the breaking of the Kali Nadi aqueduct — a most pathetic, manly document. He had no data on which to base his calculations but hearsay and the look of things; the records had been destroyed in the last Indian mutiny. And he made a mistake which cost the Government an unmentionable sum of money, and to a man of his reputation must have been worse than death."

"My dear boy, the Kali Nadi aqueduct be hanged! If we listened to all those tales of heroic failures, and counted the cost of them as so much likely to come out of our own pockets, there would n't be any need of ditches. The men who settled up this country did n't wait to hear about the failures; they went ahead, somehow, and did what they had to do. Our conditions here are no more mysterious than in hundreds of places in the West where big works have gone through — without records, without time to hunt up even such testimony as you despise — simply because they had to. The people could n't wait for a sure thing. Some of them were failures, but more of 'em have stood. I am not taking any serious chances on this scheme, mind you, though I have taken my share of chances, and may be I 've had more than my share of luck. I know what I 'm offering you, and I am sorry you have n't the nerve to make the venture. I suppose it 's the aim of your schools to lower a man's conceit of himself, but the modest layout can be overdone. I am not asking you, now, how little you know about engineering."

Philip looked down and trifled with the

loop of his watch guard. "Every one must work in his own way," he said. "I am not prepared, myself, to take the plunge in the dark which seems to be called for here. Modesty is perhaps too charitable a name for it."

"Is it partly some scruple about Dunsmuir?" Mr. Norrisson asked. Philip did not reply.

"You are too fine-spun," said his father, observing him; "but I don't blame you. The school is everything."

"I am sorry you don't like my school."

"I do like it. It is a school I could never afford to work in myself, but if my son can, why, so much has been done for the improvement of the race."

"I hope you will believe how it pains me to disappoint you, sir. I hoped to show myself equal to whatever work you intended me for; but I had n't an idea so much would be expected."

"You are wrong, Philip — thinking I expect so much; I don't place this responsibility upon you alone. Don't you understand I intend to back you, straight through, with my experience? It looks to me more like distrust of your father than of yourself, this bashfulness of yours."

It was a difficult position for Philip; but he thought it altogether due his father that he should be answered with plainness equal to his own.

"Frankly," he said, "I should prefer to make my maiden venture under a professional engineer; but a chief's place I could not take under any man. I had rather work up to it, and hold it alone. Between Dunsmuir's design and my father's experience I should be a poor figure of a chief."

"I concluded there was pride, as well as modesty, at the bottom of it. The young Westerner is a more conservative man than his father, more careful of himself in every way. He can afford to pick his steps and take his time; but, by the Lord, he owes it to his father that he can."

Philip responded with such heartiness as the conversation had left him master of. He was a prouder man than his father, although his training had made him less self-confident. It was bitter to be judged by standards for which he had not been taught the highest respect; and the fact that his father was such a power in practical affairs, had done so much where he had done nothing, made his refusal to coöperate with

him seem an exhibition of stupid, irrational, boyish conceit. They shook hands for the night earnestly, dissembling the slight chill of estrangement which both felt. Each had begun to analyze the other, comforting himself for the sense of mutual unlikeness on the old theory of types inseparable from the generation which has produced them.

"My father is a man of resources, of practical foresight, of courage in combination; in a word, a born promoter," Philip asserted, in answer to the sad whisper which said, "You can never trust him as a counselor, nor yield him unquestioning obedience as a chief."

Mr. Norrisson put away from him, as he had done many another bitterness, the discovery that his son was a man of the Dunsmuir type, a stubborn, fastidious "obstructionist," a stickler for impossible ideals. But he never allowed himself to dwell upon a disappointment; it tended to weaken that nerve upon which he depended, as a professional man depends upon conviction, and the soundness of his method.

VI.

CAPITALISTS IN THE CAÑON.

THE effect of the cañon upon Miss Summercamp was to rouse in her a vivid and very practical curiosity as to the resident family; a phase of liveliness which her mother was too indolent or too indulgent to attempt to check, although it might have been seen to annoy their young host, in his unsought part of showman. Miss Summercamp had caught sight of Alan, picturesquely engaged in fishing from the rocks; a boyish pretense for the sake of seeing and being seen of a very striking young lady visitor, strolling with her friends on the sands below. As the group drew near, he recognized Philip, and snatched off his cap in greeting; but Philip managed to get his party headed another way. Miss Summercamp perceived that he was bent on frustrating her, whenever she manœuvred for a nearer view of the inmates of that queer, low house on the hill, the "asylum," she named it, "for vic-

tims of a scheme." Partly for teasing, and more because she resented his indifference to her pleasure, she set herself to gain her end in spite of him. She had heard, she said, that the Dunsmuirs were all cranks. The young man in the pink shirt did not look a crank; he was merely a beauty. Why could n't they ask him to show them that much talked of spot called "Dunsmuir's Location"? It was pointed out straight before her, but she could see only two low, black buttes, seated on opposite shores of the river. Still, it was interesting to know that a dam was "going in" there, and that water for her desert claim would eventually flow through the big cut, where they had lunched after the manner of picnickers, though without the festal paper-bag or beer-bottle left behind in token of their visit. Philip had been respectful to the place, nor did he vauntingly prophesy concerning the future canal; this he left to Messrs. Leete and Maynard, who had been posted by his father.

Miss Summercamp declined to drink the warmish river water; she would not accept any of the substitutes provided: apollinaris, claret, ginger-ale, she would none of them.

Philip offered to fetch her some of the creek water which came down the gulch above the house, and it pleased the young lady to go with him. The favor of her company he could not refuse, although he imagined she had an ulterior purpose in offering it. After a hot walk they rounded the wire fence, and came upon a clear pool, some distance above Dunsmuir's boundaries. But this water, also, she refused to drink. It was tepid; it tasted of cattle; the pool was lined with decayed leaves.

"How very squeamish you seem to be about those people; one would think you were here to look out for them instead of us," she complained. "Are they really so peculiar that one may not ask for a glass of ice water at the door?"

"I will ask for one, certainly. This is the first time you have mentioned ice water."

"Are you going to leave me here to be hooked to death by wild cattle?"

"There is not a pair of horns in sight."

"A hundred will rise up the moment you get on the other side the fence. I declare, you treat me exactly as a bad brother treats a helpless little sister. I 've a great mind to be one, and just tag you wherever you go."

"Tag away," said Philip; "stick to your part, and I 'll try to do justice to mine."

"But goodness! I cannot go as fast as that," she called after him, as he strode down the gulch.

"Bad brothers never wait for little sisters who tag," Philip answered. Nevertheless he did wait, and with gibes and laughter, and some ill humor on Philip's side, they arrived at length at a small gate in the fence, close to a circle of poplars which guarded some invisible retreat.

"Now," said Philip, opening the gate, "it will be perfectly safe for you to proceed. One is quite enough to ask for that glass of water, and bad brothers never wait upon their sisters if they can help it."

"You overdo the part," Miss Summercamp objected; "brothers are never so consistently bad."

"You have dubbed me; I am merely the creature of your fancy."

Miss Summercamp went through the gate alone, leaving it open, however, on the chance of Philip's changing his mind. He did so, after a little, not knowing how far her freak might carry her. The gate of the cañon garden led to the poplar alley, at the upper

end of which the explorers had come out. Dunsmuir had modeled this feature of his plantation after the lady's walk at a small hacienda where he had once spent a night on one of his southern journeys. This was before he had a lady of his own, but not before he had dreams wherewith to people such a moonlighted vista as that which he paced, alone, under the black-ash trees of Mexico *templada*. He had been forced to substitute poplars for his lady of the north; otherwise he had faithfully copied the little deserted *calzada*, even to the *glorieta* at the top of it, where the trees, opening in a circle, inclosed two stone benches that faced each other, in an appealing silence and emptiness, on opposite sides of a dry fountain. As if invoked by the spell of that resemblance he had fondly sought, silence had taken possession, and the stone benches held only drifts of yellow leaves.

When Dolly Dunsmuir first set up housekeeping with her dolls in the cañon arbor, and Alan occasionally consented to visit her, the sunken tank of the fountain was filled with dead leaves, and the white painted urn was dingy and choked with dust. The following spring saw both children busy filling

up the tank with earth, and planting it with such hardy perennials as they could beg from their father's beds. These, coming up in due time, brimmed the useless basin with life and color, while the urn overflowed with garlands of white and purple clematis. When Dunsmuir saw what the children were doing, he surreptitiously added to their humble collection a regal *Lilium Auratum* for his girl-gardener, and a "giant of battles" rose for the boy. Before many seasons both rose and lily were left to Dolly's tending. Alan had stepped forth into his bold teens, and took no more interest in gardening. He had fitted up a bower of his own, — the cave underneath the bluffs, — whence he could look afar and downward, and spy the cattle on the hills, and hoot and howl to his heart's content. But Dolly remained faithful to the place of their childish trysts. It was her out-door chamber of dreams, where she sat and mused with idle hands and bright, unseeing eyes. When the dream grew too strong and pushed her hard, she would walk round and round, like a somnambulist, her face alight, her lips moving. What she whispered at such moments she would have died, girlishly speaking, sooner than have confessed. There

was little heart in these dreams and not much real imagination; only the young instinct to people empty walls with pictures of action: and Dolly's fancy was limited by the material her narrow life and her conventional reading supplied. The cañon could not make a genius of Dolly, neither could it spoil her for a happy woman.

The morning of the picnic being a Saturday, she had given her beautiful long hair its weekly washing, and now she had retired to the arbor, with a lapful of mending to employ the time while her damp mane was drying. She had tucked up one slippered foot under her, the stone benches being high; her hair, which had recovered its natural color, with an added lustre from the bath, began to creep and curl in the dry, electric air. She was pinning it back with a long, crooked shell pin, when she first became aware of voices and footsteps, not usual in that place or at that hour. She sat perfectly still, trying to catch their direction.

"Do come here, bad brother, if you want to see the Lady of Shalott."

Miss Summercamp had caught at the first fancy that crossed her to characterize the figure of Dolly sitting alone in the green

light of the arbor, her face half hidden in her spreading hair. There came no answer to this invitation; but as the voices and footsteps continued to hover distinctly about the place, Dolly gathered her work, flaming with indignation, and left the arbor. Never before had the mob been so bold.

Part way down the poplar walk she ran almost into the arms of Miss Summercamp, who, with Philip behind her, had just pushed between the tree boles. The two girls sprang apart and stared at each other; Dolly, helpless with anger and conscious of her Ophelia like locks, facing an alert, smiling little person, in a sailor hat and a smart mountain frock of colors as bright as a kingfisher's.

"Oh, excuse me!" Miss Summercamp began. "Would you be so good" —

But Dolly interrupted haughtily. "If you are wanting anything please ask at the house. We don't receive strangers by the cow-gate." With one glance at Philip from her gray eyes, now black with anger, she hurried past them, taking a near cut through the trees to spare herself the sense of being watched.

"Did you ever!" Miss Summercamp exclaimed. "Why she popped off just like an electric light when you jerk the chain. It

reminds me of the way the creatures answer in 'Alice in Wonderland.' Would they throw things at us, do you suppose, if we knocked at the front door?"

That evening Philip was in such low spirits that his father remarked it, and asked if he felt unwell.

"I am afraid you are fretting over your decision last night," said Mr. Norrisson. "It need not rest a feather's weight upon you. I may have taken a little pride thinking we could patch up a team, you and I, and see this work through; but let it go! There is always more than one way of doing a thing. I expect you 'd like to get to work. Tell me what you feel yourself able for, and I will put you in the way of it."

"Yes; I think I had better go to work," Philip assented.

"Well, the fact is there is nothing out here for an intelligent man to do but work. We all work too hard just because we get bilious and are bored to death if we don't."

The consultation ended in Philip's being given charge of a reconnoissance for selecting reservoir sites in the hill country above the cañon, with orders to meet his men at a

stage station on the nearest divide, called the "Summit." Mr. Norrisson gave his son a horse, a Winchester rifle, and bade him go buy himself some dark flannel shirts, a broad-brimmed hat, and a pair of camp blankets. With this equipment Philip took the box seat of the stage one dazzling, breezeless morning, and turned his face joyously to the hills. The old immigrant trail, now the stage road to Idaho City and the mining region beyond, makes a long detour, after leaving the valley, to avoid the bluffs, and gains a fording place some distance above the cañon. Every few miles there is a wayside post-office for the convenience of camps or outlying ranches. Philip made sketches in his note-book of one or two of these post-boxes, nailed to trunks of trees or propped upon posts within reach of Mosely the stage driver's hand. They were empty candle boxes, or other chance receptacles, with the proprietor's name rudely lettered on one end; and all were open as birds' nests to the curiosity of a wayfaring public. In one that they passed, which bore the name of Joe Mutter, a druggist's parcel was left, a soup bone, a crumpled letter, and a loose brown paper bundle exposing a pair of woman's shoes

sent to town for "two bits'" worth of cobbling.

"They 've got a sick baby at Mutter's," the driver remarked. "There comes the old woman now, on the lope, after that bottle of doctor's stuff."

Philip was drowsing along, his hat pulled over his eyes, when Mosely began rummaging in the boot again after the mail "for the cañon folks." Philip straightened up, and saw that they were at the foot of a long hill, the black crests of the lava bluffs outcropping to the right, to the left only the swell of grassy slopes cutting off the sky.

On his own side of the road, not two rods away, sat Dolly on Alan's pony, waiting for the stage.

"Ain't that just like a woman?" Mosely chuckled. "Can't never remember which side the driver sets on. Now you 'll have to hand her this newspaper truck."

"Where is their post-box?" Philip inquired.

"Don't have any. The old man don't like his letters and things hung out where everybody can handle 'em."

"Could n't they have a lock box?"

"Well, when folks are so particular as

that, the best way is to come theirselves. I can't set here and lock up people's boxes. Anything I can chuck in without gittin' down I don't mind botherin' with."

Mosely drew up the horses, and clapped down the brake. Dolly forced the pony close to the fore wheel and held up a leather satchel for the mail which Philip had in charge. She saw too late how stupidly she had placed herself on the wrong side, as if with intention, and gave him but a cold recognition. He accepted it as his meed for complicity in the Summercamp invasion. Meantime, the young people had bungled the mail business, so that a letter bearing a London postmark fell in the dust between them.

"Dear me, that 's an important one," thought Dolly, as she jumped from her saddle. Philip had his foot upon the wheel. "I 'll catch you up at the toll gate," he said to Mosely, who nodded and drove on.

Dolly, though she was down first, allowed Philip to hand her the letter, not to cheat him of his thanks. He fastened the postbag to the saddle, and stood at the pony's head, expecting the pleasure of putting her on. But the wise lassie had no mind to at-

tempt this delicate manœuvre, for the first time in her life, with a stranger's assistance.

"Oh, thanks, I 'm used to getting on by myself," she intimated cheerfully, as one who knows what she is about. She gathered the reins and placed her hands for a spring, while Philip stood aside to see her go up. But something happened: Modoc did something at the critical moment not in the programme, and instead of finding herself where she had expected to be, Dolly was hopping through the dust on one foot, clinging with both hands to the saddle, and Modoc was steadily backing away from her. A very little of this sort of exercise suffices a proud girl on a warm day, with a sophisticated-looking stranger for spectator. When Dolly had got both feet once more upon the ground, she hauled Modoc around with a vicious pull, and stood against his shoulder, trembling with a mixture of excitements, but ready now for assistance — not that she could not have mastered the pony easily had she been alone.

"He is acting in my interest," said Philip, coming up and making Modoc's acquaintance with a horseman's touch. "Shall we try it now?" He dropped into the proper

attitude, and offered his right hand ; it had a new, light-colored seal leather glove upon it. But now Dolly hung back, blushing and weak with the ordeal before her. Philip might have given a hundred guesses; he could never have come near the cause of her sudden misery. She had put on that morning her worst shoes, — her tan buskins, of all things, for riding, — and had hurried away without changing them ; they were scoured by the rocks, and whitened by alkali dust. How could she place a foot so disgracefully shod into the faultless hand held out to receive it with that particular air of homage so new and confusing ? The contrast was too much ! It took away all Dolly's nerve for the critical attempt, and though she knew quite well in theory what was to be done, the affair went off badly. Indeed, without going into details, it could hardly have been worse, from a bashful novice's point of view.

Dolly withdrew her weight from Philip's shoulder. He gave the rein tenderly into her hand, murmuring apologies, he hardly knew for what, unless that he could not feel as unhappy as she looked, nor quite regret her sweet awkwardness. Dolly rode home

burning with the resolution to get a quiet hour with Alan behind the corral at once, and to make him teach her the trick of mounting from the ground beyond peradventure of accidents. As for the tan buskins, she put them into the kitchen range before she went to dress for lessons, Margaret protesting there was "wear in them yet," and asking if shoes grew on the bushes, that she could afford to be so reckless.

VII.

A DIFFERENCE OF TASTE IN JOKES.

HAD Alan only spoken on one of those two or three happy days before the London letter came! But a tendency to mischance of one sort or another was characteristic of the boy's headlong, sanguine temperament. The good moment passed, and a change in the household atmosphere created a new barrier between him and his father.

Dolly had ridden home at the top of Modoc's speed, to make up for all foolish delays; for Dunsmuir knew to a moment how long it took a rider to meet the stage, and was ever on the watch for its distant wheels and the messenger's return. She gave him the packet, and went to her room to make herself neat for lessons. In the dining-room Alan joined her, loitering behind, his eyes still upon his half learned task. They knew that something was amiss from the answer that their father gave to Dolly's knock: —

"Excused for to-day. I have some business to attend to."

His step was not heard on the porch at his usual hour for exercise. Dolly, watering her roses outside the study window when the house shadow fell that way, heard him tramping about the room and pronouncing words to himself in a deep, perturbed voice. At dinner the young people stood waiting for him to take the head of the table.

"Margaret, will you ask him if he 's coming? He never minds you," Dolly pleaded.

Margaret sighed, and smoothed her hair back from her flushed face, and laid aside her kitchen apron before knocking at the study door.

"Will the denner wait, sir, till you 're by wi' your writing?" she asked when he had shortly bidden her "Come!"

"What! is it dinner? Let the children sit down without me. Margaret, which of the men go to town to-morrow?" It was the day before the Fourth.

"Why, sir, I think they 'll all be going but Job."

"Tell Job that Long John may stop at the cabin, and Job is to come for me with the buckboard at nine to-morrow morning. We shall be back early. John may have his evening in town."

"Will that be all, sir?"

"That is all, thank you, Margaret."

"Wad ye eat a bittie if I fetch it entil ye — just a morsel, to tak' the bluid from the head? Will ye no?" she pressed him, with motherly anxiety.

"Shut the door, and don't stand there bletherin'!" Dunsmuir shouted.

Nevertheless, an hour later the hand of Margaret noiselessly obtruded a tray into the room; on it was a dish of iced tomatoes with a mayonnaise, a plate of thin bread and butter, a slice or two of cold boiled ham, and a bottle of beer. When the tray was brought away, Margaret, who had stayed to do some ironing in the cool of the evening, saw with triumph that her offering had not been rejected.

"When he 's that way," she said to Dolly, "he 's just like a fashious wean; he disna want a thing named to him."

She repeated to no one her master's orders for the morning; all that he wished said he would prefer, she knew, to say himself. And so it happened that Alan went off at sunrise on his own scheme of pleasure for the day, — having helped himself to a cold breakfast in the pantry, — not knowing that his father

was bound for the town, like himself. Alan had one or two acquaintances who were to take part in the procession of the "Horniquebriniques." He had been urged to choose a character and to join, but, in his usual way, it was at the last moment and without premeditation that he decided to do so. His arm was but just well. Except for the stolen joy now and then of a wild moonlight gallop, life, according to his ideas, had been a steady grind. He had never acknowledged his father's right to condition him as to the use of his own horse. As a matter of principle, then, he was holding out, and cultivating, meanwhile, a sentiment of injury to strengthen his resolution.

It was in this mood that he stopped at Dutton's ranch and, assuming the owner's consent, borrowed an old mule of Job's called Susan. He also helped himself to one or two articles found in the cabin, with which to piece out his costume for the part he had chosen in the Horniquebriniques. As in the far West this humorous dramatization is not a common feature of the day we celebrate, a few words of description may help to explain its intense attractiveness to lads of Alan's age. It is a procession of mummers, masked

or otherwise, on horseback, afoot, or in floats, who burlesque in dumb show the prominent characters and institutions of the town, setting forth in a rough extravaganza their weaknesses in the popular eye. The costumes are ridiculous, the wit is coarse, the personal hits more than a little cruel. Yet the drolling seldom fails, in one way or another, to make its point, and the whole exhibition is not without a rude, poignant significance from the moral point of view.

Dunsmuir and Job were making way slowly through the crowd. They were endeavoring to gain the corner near the office of Marshall & Read, Dunsmuir's lawyers, but they were too late. The Horniquebriniques had started, the crowd backing down before them; there was nothing for it now but to haul up by the sidewalk until the fun had rolled by. Mock musicians, calling themselves the City Band, marched ahead of the procession, performing with cow bells, tinware, and Chinese instruments of sound. The humor was here so overpowering as fairly to drown its own applause.

Dunsmuir, who was chewing the cud of his last and bitterest disappointment, was somewhat grimly disposed toward the day's

festivities. He took little notice of the mob, as it screeched and rattled and caracoled by; but as the nuisance seemed to abate, Job spoke to him, calling his attention to a passing group which the crowd was then cheering. He looked up and smiled. He saw a broad, stout, florid man, costumed as a river nymph in pseudo-classic draperies, looped and girdled in such a manner as to display without offense as much as possible of his muscular proportions. He bore upon his shoulder a Chinese whiskey-jar, one of a wholesale size. The vase was labeled "Norrisson's Ditch." The nymph's girdle, which must have measured full fifty inches, was stuck full of "water-contracts." Bunches of the enormous native grown vegetables, mingled with sage-brush torn up by the roots, decorated the processional car, which was drawn by four fat, patient oxen placarded "Eastern Capital." The supporting figures of this symbolical group were an impecunious ranchman hunting in his ragged pockets for the wherewithal to pay his water rates, and an abject Chinese vegetable gardener, upon whose head from time to time the goddess of fertility tilted a small quantity of the sacred water of the ditch.

Broad as was the joke, Dunsmuir found no fault with it. But now a burst of applause greeted a new actor, who silently paced down the street at a respectful distance from the car of Irrigation. The little boys, lining the gutters and packed into the backs of farmers' wagons, screeched their comments, by way of explanation, to one another: "Hurrah for the Last Ditch!" shouted one precocious urchin.

"Says I to Sandy, 'Won't you lend me a mule?'
'Of course I will,' says Sandy,"

sang another. Dunsmuir had taken these remarks as personal to himself until he turned and saw the quixotic figure, intended to portray in its popular aspect the spirit of his well known enterprise. Both he and Dutton had recognized Susan, by her earmark, though she had been touched up anatomically with considerable skill and white paint to the likeness of a skeleton. She carried a slender rider, dressed in pasteboard armor, relic of some amateur theatricals in the town. His face was concealed by the visor of his helmet. A sprig of sage united with the flower of the wild thistle was his crest, and for a spear he carried, with some difficulty, it might be seen, an

engineer's measuring rod, to which a banneret was attached displaying the legend: —

DON'T TREAD ON MY LOCATION!

This was plain enough for all to understand. The little boys pointed out to one another his big tin sword labeled "For Jumpers," and discussed the meaning of the device displayed upon his shield — a spread eagle perched on the rock gate of the cañon, with the united crosses of St. George and St. Andrew flaming in the sky above it. This cognizance was a hasty inspiration of Alan's, tossed off in the fury of conception, in red and white and black chalks. Any compunctions which the son of Dunsmuir might have had at the last moment must have given way before the artist's hunger for appreciation. To do Alan justice, he had not meant the impersonation for mockery, but merely as a good-natured acknowledgment of the well known facts concerning his father's ditch. Above all, he had not bargained for his father as a spectator. He trusted now to spare him the pain of a recognition; but this was not to be.

Susan had one white and wicked eye, which she turned back upon the crowd, now

pressing noisily upon her sedate progress. Hitherto, whatever culminating sense of indignity she may have been nursing she had kept to herself; but now, without apparent premeditation, she bucked her rider into the middle of the street, bolted past the ox-team which blocked the way ahead, and was seen no more in town that day. The knight's helmet had tumbled awry with the jar of his fall; Alan was obliged to free his head before he could see about him. A dozen hands assisted him to rise, and all the town beheld his angry blushes and knew him for his father's son. Confused and bitterly mortified, he took the first chance of escape which occurred to him; he ran and jumped aboard the Norrisson Ditch car, and the Knight of the Location made his exit in the tail end of it, amongst the vegetables, waving his guidon and smiling in the hope of seeming not to care for the shouts of laughter which followed him. The crowd had "caught on," with a wild burst of cheers, to this last, most unintentional point which Alan had supplied, with his father as witness.

VIII.

ALAN'S ORDERS.

It had been Alan's plan to remain for the fireworks on the evening of the Fourth, but his father's bitter face came between him and all further thoughts of a "good time." By sunset he was at home. He went straight to his father's room, and the two were shut in there together. Dolly awaited anxiously the close of the interview; but when the study door opened at last, she kept away, allowing Alan to escape without a question, even from her eyes. At the usual hour she went to bid her father good-night. He detained her by the hand, leaning back in his chair and turning his face from the lamp. It was a close night, the sky overcast, the atmosphere heavy with an abortive effort to rain. The wind — what little there was — came up from the plains, a false, baffling wind, reversing the currents of coolness. It smelled of dust and wild sage, and in the pauses between the hot, prickly gusts, mos-

quitoes and moths swarmed outside the windows. All the screens were in; the lamp, lighted since dusk, increased the heat, and devoured the air of the room.

"Dolly, perhaps you will be wanting to speak to your brother to-night," said Dunsmuir, wearily. The lamp threw deep shadows over his lowered eyelids as he lay back in his great leather chair. It was some time since Dolly had seen him in that strong, direct light, of an evening; she thought him much worn, and thinner, even, since the spring.

"Has he gone out of the house?" he continued. "Say good-night to him. We may not see so much of him for a time." He cleared his voice, which broke from nervousness or fatigue, and sat up, looking straight before him. "I shall not tell you his last ill omened exploit. Perhaps he will tell you himself; it would cost him little, for I doubt if he sees what it signifies. I do not know how to reach him, nor indeed if there be any depth in him to reach. I have thought to try him now in earnest. Since he will not work, either for his love or his fear; since it seems he neither understands nor respects what we are here to do, nor enters into it except in a low, clownish spirit — let him

work now for his bread. To-morrow he goes below. He will live at the cabin, get his meals with the men, and take orders from Job. I will have no idle mockers at my table. Now, we 'll say no more about it. Show him all the kindness in your heart — but remember, you are not to go seeking him at the cabin. After to-night he is one of the force till he shall win home by the right road."

Dolly blushed redder and redder until the smarting tears stood in her eyes. She could not speak, or she might have had occasion to repent her words; neither would she leave the room while her heart was swelling with resentment of Alan's punishment. She looked up presently and smiled, with an effort at firmness, in the face of the judge, who was also the father. He thanked her with a speechless look. He had not thought that anything could have eased him like that smile of his woman-child; but at midnight, sitting by himself, his thoughts went darkly back to Alan's offenses, which were all of a sort peculiarly offensive to himself.

"The lad shows neither sense nor spirit, nor the conduct of a gentleman," he said aloud, in the silence, which he was accus-

tomed to address in moments of deep spiritual disturbance. "Let him go where plain lessons are to be learned of plain men. There is not a man in my employ but can set my son the example of all I have failed to teach him."

Dolly waited up for Alan as late as she dared, for fear of disturbing her father, who liked the house to be quiet always at the same hour. It then occurred to her that he might already have gone up to his bed. She went to his room and knocked, but got no answer. Her room was next to his, both opening by low, casemented dormers upon the flattish slope of the roof. She leaned out and saw Alan asleep on the shingles outside his window, his head and arms resting upon the sill. His attitude kept the expression of the mood in which he had flung himself down. She crept out upon the roof and knelt beside him, whispering a little choking prayer. The heavens were dark; as she lifted her face one big drop of rain fell upon her forehead, the sole birth from that night-long wrestling of wind and cloud.

Drought prevailed, and toward morning the sky slowly cleared. The wind blew Dolly's curtains wide apart. A sunbeam,

striking the mirror propped up on her dressing table, made quivering rainbow patches on the walls. A stronger gust blew something off the window-ledge, and, opening her eyes, she saw on the matting a huge, overblown giant-of-battles rose. Wrapped about the stem was a folded paper which explained itself.

I am not going to the cabin to take orders from my father's men. I 'll pitch myself off the bluffs first. Father has been down on me this long while, so I may as well take myself off. They need not look for me in the river, nor in the low places in town. I am not going to play the fool, so no one need worry; and when I can show a decent bit of a record may be I will come home. Good-by, Dolly; say good-by to good old Peggie. You are the ones who will miss me. If ever I come back, it will be for your sakes. I was n't asleep when you kissed me last night. I did n't mind it, but I did n't want to talk. Yours ever,

ALAN.

P. S. I shall not use my father's name until he takes back some things he has said. So you need n't go through the papers look-

ing for news of one Alan Dunsmuir, for there 's "nae sic" a person.

With much hesitation, on account of its flippant tone, Dolly showed her father this message. Dunsmuir devoured the words with but one thought; it was little to him now, the lad's truculence or the spirit in which he bore himself under correction. The one agonized question pierced through all that could wait:

"My son, where is he?"

They traced him to town, where he and Modoc were well known. He had borrowed a small sum of money of Peter Kountze, whom he had met at the Green Meadow, and had asked to be directed to the camp of engineers doing preliminary work on the Lower Snake; and thither, next day, they followed him. The search party were informed that on the previous day a young stranger, light-haired, tallish, riding a pinto pony, had come down that way, asking for Philip Norrisson, who had never been with that division at all. The transit-man had told him that Philip Norrisson's party was in the mountains a matter of two days' journey from the camp. The young stranger, who

gave his name as Robert Allen, had slept in camp and struck out early next morning for the mountains, expecting to reach the stage station at the Summit by nightfall.

When the question was asked, What had he talked about the evening before? it was remembered that he had said he was intending to try for a position on Philip Norrisson's party; and when objection had been raised that the reservoir party would soon be through work and back in town, he had replied that it was no matter; Norrisson was a good fellow, who would be sure to put him in the way of something he could do; he was ready for anything. Peter Kountze, being further questioned, reported that Alan's first plan had been to strike for the coast, where he proposed to ship aboard a sealer bound for the Bering Sea; else to work his passage south on a San Francisco steamer, and to take the chances in that direction. Peter modestly admitted that he had tried to dissuade Alan from these projects, and, failing, had refused to lend him money more than sufficient to keep him a few days, if he stayed near home. Alan had then endeavored to find a purchaser for Modoc, but without succeeding in getting

anything like what he considered a fair price. So it appeared his designs were somewhat vague and fluid as yet.

No time was lost in following up the reservoir party; but neither at the Summit nor from any of Norrisson's men could a word be learned of Alan. No one had seen or heard of him since he turned his back on the tents and struck out across the sage-brush. At the engineers' camp on the Lower Snake all news of him ceased as if the plains had opened and swallowed him.

In Alan's case a wild figure of speech had come literally true. The boy's brown cheeks were whitening in one of those oubliettes which occur as part of the black lava formation that is the floor of the Snake River plains; a floor continuous and solid for the most part, but strangely cracked and riven, undermined in places, and pierced with holes resembling the bull's-eye of a vault. Into one of these traps Alan had descended; no one seeing him go down but Modoc, who stood long, and waited, and tugged at his rope halter, and pawed the dirt and stones, and neighed to his master in vain.

IX.

THE OUBLIETTE.

The evening Alan camped with the engineers some of the boys were telling stories around the fire in front of the office tent. They spoke of the wonders and mysteries of the great lava desert, which mantles in dust and silence all that region north of the Snake for four hundred miles of its course between river and mountains. Camp-fire gossip, in these arid lands, runs much upon discoveries of water, as in the mountains of the same region it runs upon rich finds of gold. One of the boys, who had been a stock-herder, told of a pool or well in the heart of the Black Lava, the water of which was fresh, though defiled, at the time of his discovery, by carcasses of dead cattle; the poor beasts, mad with thirst, had crowded upon it when all the streams were frozen, and perished through overweighting the ice which covered the pool. The depth of it was unknown. It was said to go down to the level

of that fabled underground valley of the Snake, where, beneath the lava crust, imprisoned streams, identical in source with the river above, were tunneling their way to daylight.

It was said that in certain places these subterranean waters gushed out from beneath the lava bluffs in fountains of white foam, bringing fertility to some chosen valley, located, perhaps, by a refugee Mormon with a keen patriarchal scent for pasture, or a road-weary plainsman who here unshipped his wagon-top, and turned loose his lean stock and his tribe of white-headed children. It was loosely ventured round the camp-fire that rich washings of fine gold might be gathered from the beds of these hidden watercourses, in pot holes or crevices where the sluicings of ages had been collecting.

Alan's eyes grew big at these tales. He asked many questions; in particular why these exciting presumptions had never been put to the proof. He was told that, in all probability, until that region had been scientifically explored they were incapable of proof. The few doors which opened into that mysterious cellarage were dismal traps not easy to find; and those best acquainted

with the country were shy of meddling with its secrets. The river itself had a sinister reputation. The Indians never trusted their naked bodies to its flood; no old plainsman could be induced to pull off his shirt and plunge into the Snake, nor would he suffer a "tenderfoot" to do so in his presence without earnest remonstrance and warning.

Another of the boys claimed to be the discoverer of a cave which he compared to a vast sunken jug. He had come upon it accidentally, riding as messenger from camp to camp; had stopped only long enough to drop a stone down the pit-dark hole, where all was silence and airless night. The depth, from the sound, had been something awesome. Later, with two comrades, he had searched for the "jug" over every foot of the bare plain where he had tried to locate it by memory. They had ridden from town equipped with ropes and candles; but not that day nor ever afterward had he found the lost entrance to the cave. It had relapsed into the mystery that broods over the desert, the silence which it keeps, though the ear of man is ever at its lips.

The trend of the Great Snake River plains is distinctly toward the west. That way the

mountains open to welcome the warm winds from the coast, which temper the winters of all that inland region. As summer advances and drought encamps upon the land, the visiting winds are succeeded by local breezes which blow with the regularity of day and night. It is then the great air currents, rising from the burning face of the desert, beckon to the mountain winds, and as punctual as a sea breeze they come whooping down at night through cañons and passes of the foothills. No sleeper, upon the ground or under heated house roofs, but is grateful for these night winds; no sunburned traveler, beneath the bright stars of the desert, but feels his strength renewed, bathed in that steady, balmy tide of coolness.

Alan rode out of camp after such a night of solid sleep, very different from the same night which his father had watched out in the cañon. It was the time of perfect equilibrium which comes twice in the twenty-four hours, once after sunrise and again about the setting of the sun. The silence of the desert was unbroken by bird or breeze or sound of footsteps, excepting the steady clink and shuffle of Modoc's hoofs getting over the ground in excellent cayuse fashion.

The little horse was at home; his ears were pricked forward, his eye keen for the trackless way he knew so well. He kept edging northward toward the pass between the low, black buttes, standing apart like gate-posts to the mountains; between them lifted a far, aërial vision of the blue Owyhees, and the War Eagle, wearing his crest of snow. The face of the plain was featureless and wan. There is but one color to this desert landscape — sage-green, slightly greener in spring, and grayer in summer, with a sifting of chrome dust. In winter it is most impressive under a light fall of snow, not heavy enough to hide the slight but significant configuration of the ground, yet white enough to throw into relief the strange markings of black lava, where it crops out, or lies scattered, or confronts the traveler in those low, flat-headed buttes, so human, so savage, in their lone outlines, keeping watch upon the encroachments of travel.

Alan had been in the saddle since seven o'clock, and it was now noon. He was looking about for a good spot where Modoc might pick a little grass while he ate his lunch. Nothing more quickly catches the eye in an uncivilized region than a bit of painted

wood. Alan could not have passed by without seeing a broken wagon tongue abandoned in the sage-brush; and this one had the peculiarity of a new rope cleverly knotted about the middle of it. The end of the rope disappeared in the ground. Alan stopped to investigate this mystery. To his inordinate delight he found that he was kneeling at the lip of one of those dry wells — perhaps the "jug" itself. No consideration known to the mind of a boy could have deterred him from attempting to go down. He took, however, a few simple precautions. He made fast his pony to a stout sage stump. Modoc stood well as a rule, but his heart was traveling northward, and his legs might be tempted to follow. Alan then tried the rope; the knots held. The thought did strike him, with a slight chill, What has become of the man who tied those knots? He leaned his face above the hole and shouted; he would have been surprised indeed had he received an answer. He gathered stones and tried the depth by the sound of their fall. It was deep, but not so appallingly deep, and the bottom, from the sound, was perfectly dry. Of the shape or nature of the walls he could learn but little, because of their size and the

smallness of the orifice. He pulled up the rope; it was, at a guess, a twenty-foot braided lariat, with a second longer rope spliced to the end of it: fifty feet, at the most, would cover the length of that swinging tether. He now collected a bundle of sage sticks for torches, small ones to light quickly and larger ones to burn longer. These he tied together into a fagot, which he dropped down the hole. To provide against accident to the precious bundle he fastened a torch stick to his belt. Matches he had with him, but he felt in his pocket to make sure. He took pride in these precautions, so sensible did they strike him, so experienced and business-like. His heart beat with expectation great and vague. Modoc watched his master restively; but without a glance at his pony, or a farewell pat, Alan put both feet into the hole, and his head was soon below the roots of the sage-brush.

When he had lowered himself about ten feet, his body began to oscillate with a slow, irregular, sickening motion. He felt himself miserably detached. He struck out with his feet, hoping to touch the sides of the vault; but he had now reached the bilge, and kicking did but aggravate the spiral movement,

which became more pronounced and confusing as the rope lengthened above him. In another moment his toes touched the bundle of torch sticks, his stretched muscles subsided, and he stepped free upon the floor of the cave. When a momentary dizziness had passed he looked up and saw the light of day above his head — a small, white star which shed no rays, but rather increased by contrast the palpable effect of the darkness into which he had dropped as into another element.

He made haste to light his torch. The flame spluttered and flared; he looked about him, and saw, to his horror, that he was not alone in the cave. The man who tied the knots had been watching him from the moment his body had darkened the hole. Alan had seen Juan Pacheco the homicide only once, by moonlight, at long rifle range; he knew not a feature of him, but he was certain that it was he, the yellow Mexican, crouched upon the floor of the cave pointing a Winchester in his face. Pacheco, if he it were, seemed to recognize his visitor. He smiled a cruel, half-breed smile, displaying a bad set of wrinkles around the corners of his mouth.

"*Ven aca!*" he commanded quietly. Alan moved away from the hole.

"How many more come?"

"No one," said Alan. "I am alone."

Pacheco looked as if he did not believe him. A moment passed in silence, Pacheco listening, Alan breathing quick and hard.

"Hold up the light! *Mas arriba!*"

Alan held up his torch in both hands as high as he could, and Pacheco went through his clothes, taking from him his pistol, his cartridge belt, and his precious matches.

"Sst! What is that?"

Modoc, stamping on the hard baked ground, was calling to his master with a loud, cheerful whinny.

"It is my pony, poor brute; he wants me," Alan explained.

"It is a good brute. You have tied him? *Bueno, muy bueno!*"

Alan did not know then why Pacheco should have called it good; but afterward he knew. He explained how he had come upon the hole by chance on his way across the plains northward to the Summit, which he must reach before dark. Pacheco seemed to attend, but from his face Alan could gather nothing of the effect of his words.

"Miguel Salarsono — is he dead?

This was the man Pacheco had knifed. He was dead, but Alan hesitated at the truth, which Pacheco read in his eyes.

"*Esta bien*," he said coolly. "They want me. Where now Peter Kountze?"

"In town when I saw him last."

"What day you see him?"

"Long time ago." Alan lied, thinking it would be bad for him should he confess to having met Kountze the day before.

Again Pacheco read his face. He gave a dissatisfied grunt. "Put out your light," said he.

"It smokes," said Alan, "but it is better than no light."

"You are with one who knows his way," said Pacheco in Spanish. Alan barely understood him; but he thought to flatter Pacheco by seeming to know his language.

"I want to look around, now I 'm down here. Rum place, ain't it?" he said, pretending to a cheerful curiosity he was far from feeling.

"You shall have plenty time."

"And plenty light, too, I hope."

Pacheco cut him short, roughly assisting him to put out his torch. He undid from

about his waist a greasy silk sash, gave Alan one end of it, and kept the other himself. "*Anda!*" he commanded. "*Por aqui*," and he led on, Alan following at the girdle's length as best he could. Whether they were traversing a series of chambers connected by passages, or one long gallery of varying width and height, Alan could surmise only by the sound of their footsteps on the rock floor, which sometimes rang as between lofty walls and again fell dull and flat. He concluded presently that he was getting his underground eyesight, else the darkness was no longer absolute. Pacheco called a halt, and changed the order of march, putting Alan before him. The roof here descended to within a few feet of the floor. Alan could make out the shape of a low opening like the entrance to a drift, defined against a faint light beyond. They went down upon hands and knees, and crawled forward, along a narrow incline which rose to the level of what by contrast seemed a fair chamber; round, like a congealed bubble in the rock; not lighted, yet something less than dark, owing to a crack in the roof, deep, but narrow as a spear, through which a gleam of white daylight stole into the cell.

"I make you welcome, Señor Caballero, to this your house," said Pacheco, as they stood upright, in the dim oubliette, facing each other.

Alan struggled to be calm and to take the words, spoken in Spanish, as the language of compliment, at the worst as a grim joke befitting the place.

"*Muchas gracias, señor*," he responded, with a smile as wan as the imprisoned ray of daylight that touched his face. "It is a very good house. You are living here *secreto, retirado*, I understand. I can keep dark. It shall be all the same, I promise you." He spoke slowly, with extreme emphasis, that Pacheco might lose no word of his meaning. "I swear, it shall be all the same as if I had never seen you here. The cave shall be forgotten. Understand?"

"*Si, si.* All the same — after you get out." Pacheco grinned significantly, and Alan's heart turned over in his breast.

Beyond the cur-like upward glance of his covert eye and his occasional cruel smile, Pacheco's face relapsed into impassiveness. The man had been villainous by torchlight; he was ghastly now by the faint, white daylight, like one on whom the sun had not shone for months.

"How long — how long," Alan gasped, "have you been down here?"

"The light come fourteen time since the night I skip," said Pacheco, glancing upward at the crack in his dungeon roof.

"Alone?"

"*A mis solas.*"

"Why don't you clear out — vamose? The country is big."

"It is very big, señor; and I have no horse."

"Where is your own horse?"

"He play out, three miles; he drop in the sage-brush. I am here very safe; by and by pretty hungry." He grinned and shrugged expressively. His philosophy of suffering promised as little pity for another as he wasted upon himself.

"Good God, man! does no one know you are here?"

"One too many know I am here," said Pacheco, ominously, laying his dark forefinger on Alan's breast. "You make yourself one little fool when you come down that hole."

"I can go up again. I must go, Pacheco. My horse is dry. No water since morning."

"*Poco, poco tiempo.* When it is dark, I go up. I give him water."

"But I 've twenty-five miles to go before dark." Alan was shaking from head to foot.

"Sit down, *hombrecito*. Rest you'self. You have hunt me like jack-rabbit; now you have find me in my hole. What 's the matter with that?"

"God in heaven, Pacheco, my people will go mad!" the boy shouted, forgetting that no one would expect him that night or any night, that his absence was now a fact accepted by all who knew him above ground. This last cold detail of his situation closed upon him like the silence that follows the echo of a dungeon door. He flung himself upon the Mexican with a captive's madness, throwing away every hope of pity, and grappled with him as his open enemy.

Pacheco carried a knife concealed at the back of his neck with which he might have finished the encounter, but murder was no part of his present intention toward his prisoner. He closed with the lad, hugging him in his arms, and the pair rocked to and fro and staggered about the dim place till Alan went down, dragging Pacheco with him: the back of Alan's head struck the floor of the cave with a sickening dunt. Pacheco freed himself, but Alan lay still.

X.

THE WHITE CROSS.

Daylight had faded from the crevice when Alan came to himself. The cave was perfectly dark. He started up on his elbow, but fell back, giddy and sick and sore. It was some moments before he could summon courage to test the silence. No answer came to his first hoarse call; yet Pacheco might be in the outer cave. He called again, and listened, holding his breath, and hearing nothing but his heart beating like a clock. He shouted, he screamed, he sobbed, as a child awakened by a frightful dream that cannot make itself heard.

He lay all night at the mercy of hideous doubts and speculations which only the morning could set at rest. Had Pacheco gone? Had he left the rope? His flesh rose in chills, and again he burned and stifled with the torture of these questions. In his tossings on the floor of the cave his hand had struck against a pail, heavy with a delicious weight

of ice-cold water. He had splashed it over himself in his eagerness, dragging it toward him. In the morning he made a terrible discovery. All Pacheco's little store of food and candle had been set forth in plain sight for his successor's use; but the matches were ruined. Alan had drenched them in his transport of drinking in the night. For a moment he gave way again, clasping his head, and sobbing, and rolling about on the floor.

He felt sick and bruised, and silly with weakness. His eyes ached, his throat and jaws were sore, his hair incrusted with blood from the cut on his scalp; but no bones were broken, and he knew that food would strengthen his heart. As he crawled about, gathering materials for a breakfast, he made a new and momentous discovery. Pacheco had left him a letter, of explanation, perhaps, or direction. But when Alan came to examine this sole link between him and the living, he found that he could not decipher it. He had persuaded Pacheco too well of his linguistic acquirements; the letter was in Spanish, mongrel Spanish, brutally ill-written with a pencil on a bit of greasy, wrinkled paper bag which had refused to take the

marks distinctly. Alan could have crushed, torn it; he could have killed Pacheco for inventing this new torture. He groaned, and put it away, and struggled to swallow some food, for a greater test of his nerve was before him. If Pacheco had left the way of escape open, why had he written a letter?

He had been led into the cell by the right-hand wall; he took the left going back. One hand he kept upon the rock, groping and shuffling forward, past angles and turns which he remembered, till he entered the great chamber with its one far bright star of blessed daylight set in the blackness of its roof. One instant he hung back; he dared not look: the next, suspense was past — the rope was gone.

All that day he sat in the twilight of the inner cell and pored over the letter. Sweat broke out upon his flesh, the agony of attention balked his memory, and his mind refused to act. The few words that he could read held aloof in maddening incoherency from those that were dark to him: "water — the white cross — the great cave — twenty days" — then something about *mi amiga;* the noun was feminine. And then the writer

signed himself — "with the cheek of the devil!" groaned Alan, surveying the ghastly words of compliment to a doomed man, "With great respect, Your servant, Juan Pacheco."

All day he hammered his brain over this diabolical message, and when he could see no longer he sat in darkness, and its goblin characters came out on the strained wall of vision and tortured him with guesses. He fell asleep repeating the words that led his mind a weary dance far into the night: the white cross — water. Twenty days, twenty days, twenty days.

Three times the light faded from the crack and came again, and, sleeping or waking, the word water had become the unceasing pang that haunted his consciousness. He had counted his stock of food, and of candles, which were nothing without matches, yet might serve as food should he come to a rat-like desperation in the last stage of hunger; but he knew he should not starve to death. Every day while the wan light lasted he ranged round the walls of his cell; searching crannies and crevices and spots of shadow, listening, sounding for hollow places, stamping, and sometimes breaking out and

howling like a trapped animal, all in an awful, breezeless silence, never altering from hour to hour, from day to day. By drinking sparely, at night and morning only, he made his precious pail last a week. On the eighth day he ate little, fearing to increase the desire for water, which had taken already the form of a nervous demand. The food that remained to him was of a thirst-provoking quality — a sack of mouldy pilot-bread, some pounds of dried salt beef, several cans of cooked beans, a few dusty, gritty raisins in a paper bag. He had heard that small, smooth pebbles held in the mouth promote moisture, and occupy the mind of one suffering from thirst. On the ninth day he collected such pebbles as he could find and tried the effect of them, but without much enthusiasm for the result.

On the tenth day he made a joyful discovery. A greasy waistcoat of Pacheco's lay bundled in one corner of the cell near his bunk; Alan had never touched it; it had for him that personal association which made the sight of it repulsive. But this morning he took it up and examined the pockets in the sudden hope that he might find a stray match or two left by chance; and he was

not disappointed. He found a good bunch of California matches united on one thick stem, which had worked through a hole in the waistcoat side-pocket, and lay concealed between the stuff and the lining. That day he explored the dark passage by candle-light. His tongue was so swollen that he could no longer swallow food. He had fever, and could sleep but little, and then was beset by morbid dreams. His strength was fast going. On the eleventh day he dragged himself into the outer cavern, wondering at his fatal mistake of wasting a whole day in the passage, when the letter had named only the *caverna grande*. His legs would not bear him up to make the round of the vast walls; but he sat himself down on the floor, and lighted all his candles, placing them a little way off on the floor in sockets of drip, that he might get their combined effect without the shock of it in his eyes, which were tender to the light.

His face was as white as the candles, his bloodshot eyes were sunken and wild. He had picked at a roughness on the side of one of his fingers till the place was raw; he was picking at it now as he stared before him. He had a crazed, broken sensation in his

head ; his mind labored and drifted heavily. He thought his senses must be going when, on a space of wall above him, where the light struck upward at a new angle, appeared a sign chalked upon the rock in the form of a cross. Trembling he looked away at the reality about him, at the place of his living burial, and then fixed his eyes once more upon the spot where the cross had appeared. It was still there. And below, at the meeting of the wall with the floor of the cave, there rested an immovable spot of blackness. He shifted his lights; the shadow did not move. It was the opening of a passage or burrow beneath the rock. Hands perhaps as weak as his had scooped it; and some doomed captive as desperate as himself had marked the spot with the symbol of suffering and of mercy, in memory of his release from torment.

He crawled into the hole, keeping a lighted candle before him; only his panting breath stirred the flame in that lifeless air. Creeping forward on his elbows, guarding always his light, its soft ray fell upon a dark, sunken pool; on the brink of which he fell on his face and lapped like one of Gideon's three hundred.

The agony was over. Imprudence followed, and all the train of effects resulting from the nervous shock his system had suffered. He gained no strength; he lost, indeed, from day to day; and the twentieth day was at hand. He had made himself a calendar of match sticks, which he dropped, one each time the light came and went, into an empty tin can, which thus became the repository of his great hope and his greater dread. When the match sticks numbered nineteen, Alan laid himself down beneath the hole in the outer chamber, resolved to lie there till rescue came or death. On the back of Pacheco's letter he had scrawled a few words to his father, in case deliverance should come too late. Having eased himself of this last message, with a pail of water near, and such food as he could retain out of the little remaining of his poor stock, he lay and watched out the twentieth day and the night that followed, not daring to sleep. Another day passed, and the light faded from the hole, and he prayed that he might go before the morning watch, for the suspense was worse than death. He closed his eyes and went incontinently to sleep. The angels might waken him if help should come; he could watch no longer.

In the night a voice called from above; it became part of his dreams, and turned them into nightmare; the call was repeated again and again, but he did not wake.

Then, with a prayer to Mary of the Mercies, a girl, kneeling by the hole, bound her long black braids about her head, reefed her skirts, and, taking hold of the rope she had made fast, descended fearlessly into the cave. Pacheco's friend had come.

XI.

A TOUCH OF NATURE.

PHILIP'S return trip from the mountains was hastened by a letter from his father requesting his presence in town on a certain day of the month. He left his men to bring in the camp outfit, pressing on alone ahead of the wagons on horseback, and reaching town well within the stipulated time, tired as a hunter, but gay with the thought of the long mountain miles he had made at the word of command. He lingered over his toilet next morning, with a keen zest for the comforts of civilization, after three weeks of gritty camp life in boots and corduroys and crumpled flannels. It was luxury to put on a silk shirt and to brush his hair before a triple mirror. He trimmed the ends of his mustache, taking all the time which that delicate operation deserves; he examined critically the new barber's cut to which he had submitted himself the evening before at the Transcontinental. He perfected his

outer man deliberately, in every detail, and descended to breakfast in a brilliant humor of expectation for whatever new turn of the wheel had brought him back again to the affairs of men. Even the little new town, whose social note had struck him as so crude and stridulous, contrasted with the life of the hills had gained quite a gay, civic, important air. He had amused himself with thinking of it the evening before, as he walked home by the white light of the electric lamps.

Philip had passed the ordeal, spiritual as well as physical, and was acclimated to the western movement. His father saw it in his glance, in his bearing, as he walked into the room, and rejoiced that he could call the clean, high-headed young fellow his son. He would have liked to cuff him about a little and to clap him on the back, to take some of the starch out of him; yet the starch was well, so that there was "sand" underneath. Breakfast at Mr. Norrisson's was not a perfunctory matter of a roll and a cup of coffee, but a regular sitting in three courses, with conversation and good appetites. To the manner of this also Philip was acclimated; he needed no urging when the third course

came upon the table, even when it included that ultra-Americanism, pancakes hot from the griddle. Mr. Norrisson's Mexican cook was a genius, at sixty dollars a month, and could turn his small dark hand to the cooking of any clime. (It must have been observed too often to be worth mentioning that men, when they keep house, will always have a cook, whether the closets be cleaned or not.) It was Enrique's pet grievance that Wong was allowed to make the coffee at breakfast. He listened at the window of the butler's pantry to hear his own praises when his creations were handed in, but when he heard praise of Wong's coffee instead, he swore strange oaths among his pots and pans, making the kitchen hideous with their clatter. Hearing echoes of the din, Wong would smile mysteriously, and pass Enrique's triumphs with sweet condescension. It was Enrique's revenge, at breakfast, to hasten out to the garden and to pick a bouquet for the table, well knowing that he alone of all in the house had the touch for flowers, and that Wong's efforts were simply insufferable. It was he who filled the lesser punch bowl with roses or crisp nasturtiums dewy with their morning sprinkling; it was Wong who

swore in the depths of his white, starched gabardine when he spied the insolent drops on his spotless cloth. He would have given a month's wages for courage to fling bowl and contents at the head of his fellow-craftsman. But out of these jealousies professional and racial came exceeding peace and perfection of service to Mr. Norrisson. It was his policy that the heathen should rage; that out of their dissensions he might make profit to himself.

"Has Alan Dunsmuir turned up yet?" Philip inquired.

His father was finishing his plate of California peaches. He paused and mopped himself before answering; he was a critical but not a dainty feeder. Moreover, he did not know at first to what the question referred; then he remembered.

"Why, of course, that must have been what Dunsmuir meant. He excused himself from the dinner we gave Westerhall; some family matter; he did n't put it very plainly, but I saw there was trouble, so I did n't ask any questions. But I remember now. Young Dunsmuir was reported missing about a fortnight ago. What has he been up to?"

"I don't know at all," said Philip. "They sent a man after me to inquire if he had been with my party. I did not get a very clear idea what the trouble is, or what they are afraid of."

"Depend on it, if Dunsmuir has had trouble with his boy he 's the one to blame. He 'd be sure to buckle the curb too tight. You will have to remember his arbitrary temper when you come to work with him. However, you are cool enough, and you have a manner that will flatter the old sachem. But you must look out and not carry etiquette too far. — We 'll get through with Wongy Pongy before we begin on business."

When the last dishes were on the table, Wong was ordered to tell Simpson that the horses would not be wanted that morning. "Now," said Mr. Norrisson, "shall we smoke here or outside?"

"I am very comfortable," said Philip, helping himself to one of his father's cigars.

"Well, I must tell you the circus has begun. In fact it 's pretty nearly over. We have had our season of wrath and bitterness. Dunsmuir is not so topping as he used to be; whether it 's this break his boy has

made, or what, he 's not the man he was. Crotchets play the mischief with a man's powers. Westerhall arrived, as you know, last week," Mr. Norrisson went on. "We got together after a few preliminaries, and we offered Dunsmuir a slice of the stock. But we made it pretty plain that we proposed to dispense with his services as engineer. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'this is a very fair offer you make me for my resignation. But I intend to build my own canal. I have staked my professional word on the verity and importance of this work, and I shall see it done, and honestly done,' — mark the point he always makes of his honesty as against our supposed want of it, — 'if it be the last work of my life. This may not strike you as business,' said he, 'but it is where the business hits me.'

"At our next meeting I showed him that he had nothing to sell. He had shown his hand to Westerhall, and all he had was the opinion of Marshall & Read, his lawyers; and on that very opinion we based our claim. Now there were two clauses to it: Dunsmuir read his title by the first clause, and we took the second and read it just the other way; and yet it was a sound, well-considered judg-

ment by two of the ablest men we have out here. It came about to this: Dunsmuir's claim was good to build on; it was good for nothing if it lay idle, and we went ahead and built the canal. Water belongs to the man who uses it. We claimed his location, *and shall hold it*, on the ground that we are ready to build our canal now, while he is only pottering at a rate that will not see his finished in half a hundred years. He took occasion to remind me, right there, that our company's policy had been one of obstruction 'unscrupulous and persistent,' else his ditch might have gone through years ago. And I endeavored to show him that it was *his* policy of antagonism which had antagonized us; that he might have gone in with us had he chosen, and saved all this friction between us. Here he shut up and would say no more. He had got very pale, and his hands shook as he gathered up his papers. He looked as if he had n't slept for a week. I wish, confound it, I had known, or remembered, about this trouble with his boy. Handsome little rascal! I used to see him around town cutting up all manner of cowboy capers on that spotted pony of his. What did you say he 's been up to?"

Philip explained again what he knew of the circumstances.

"Well, I wish I had got on to it sooner. Dunsmuir 's badly strapped, I hear. I might have offered him some help in the way of his search. Or we might have waited a little — well, we could n't wait. Westerhall understood there would be trouble, but when we came to talk it over I could see he did n't want to leave Dunsmuir out in the cold; though, as I said to him, a man who won't accept any terms but his own, or any facts but his own as to his real position, is a difficult man to deal with.

"'But we must give him something,' said Westerhall. 'He is too poor to get out of the country, you say, and he is too strong a man to be left in black dudgeon here, to head every movement against us in the future. He must be included in some way.'

"'How are we going to include him?' said I. 'We tried him fifteen years ago, but he would n't be included on any reasonable basis. He stood off and called us swindlers. Now we are jumpers. It does n't make a happy family,' said I.

"'Give him the work,' said Westerhall; and he showed me there was a feeling for

him in London, where his Indian record is on the blue-books; and it counts with them, of course, that he is an M. I. C. E. And then Westerhall and I had it for the rest of the day.

"But, as you may have observed, I am a man of compromises. This is the way I put it to myself: Suppose we make Dunsmuir our chief engineer, not at his demand, but as a point we yield out of generosity to a broken man. He knows I don't want him on the work, that I have refused to have him. Now if he takes that offer from our company, the man is ours. I am the manager of the company."

"How can you subsidize a man by giving him his own? Will the legal aspect of Dunsmuir's claim affect its justice in his own eyes?" asked Philip.

"It does not now; but his light will grow. Property that has no existence in law can't be peddled about under the name of a water-right. I think he has had his misgivings that his claim was wearing pretty thin. Observe, he never consulted his lawyer till the other day, when he knew he had to; he did n't want to be too sure. It 's the nature of dreams to look queer by daylight.

Dunsmuir's fifteen years' fight will look very strange to him six months from now. However, it makes no difference to me; let him take our offer, or walk off with his pride and an empty pocket."

"What is it you propose to offer him, now?"

"Make him chief engineer and give him a little stock."

"And how will you put the offer of stock to a man who has no rights in the scheme?"

"We shall put it this way: Parties might have got hold of that location who would have given us more trouble than you have; who would have forced us to build before we were ready. This is to pay you for keeping up the right for us."

"That is very clever," said Philip, who thought it infernally clever; "but Dunsmuir will take it as a taunt. You can never compromise him through offering him a share in his own scheme. You might as well try to suborn an author, offering him a royalty on his book."

"Yes, yes; I know the pride he has in his design, his responsibility, and all that. But his plans went out of his hands in our first deal. He will find, after a while, that

he is being taken care of on this scheme, and that I am taking care of him."

Philip rose from the table and walked to the open window, where the purest of morning breezes drifted in from the fields of blossoming alfalfa.

"Why does your company wish to own its engineer?" he asked.

"*I* am the company here," said Mr. Norrisson, disdaining the shelter of the collective noun; and for the first time in his various expositions of the dispute between himself and Dunsmuir he showed the bad blood he had always attributed to Dunsmuir alone.

"I submit that it will never occur to Dunsmuir that he is being 'taken care of,'" said Philip; and he triumphed in the thought. His sympathies were with the man of his own profession. "The work is his by every right of discovery, of design, of fitness, and of sacrifice. Why should he not take it? Who is the man that can say, 'I gave it him in pity for his delusions'?"

"He will take it, that 's what I say," scoffed Norrisson. "He will take the stock, too. He knows the worth of money, and he knows the need of it. What shall follow

remains to be seen. I am satisfied, remember, though I seem to have backed down on a vital point. Dunsmuir is chief engineer; well and good. And my son will be his first assistant. How does that strike you?"

It struck Philip in so many different ways at once that he could not choose instantly the best answer, the truest to his scruples, his doubts, and his deep, excited joy.

"May I ask, sir, if this is part of the 'deal'?" was what he said.

Mr. Norrisson answered indirectly. "It is understood that you are to have the position."

"Whether Dunsmuir wants me or not? I should find it unpleasant to be foisted on my chief."

"You are not supposed to know it. I need not have told you; but it 's impossible to foresee what you will shy at next. We have another meeting fixed for this afternoon," Mr. Norrisson added, rising, and touching the bell. "We shall put in our final proposition as I have stated it. I want you there. I want Dunsmuir to see you before he 's had time to take a prejudice."

"I must ask you to excuse me," said Philip, decidedly.

"Why excuse you? It was for this I sent for you."

Philip, who coveted Dunsmuir's favor for reasons too delicate, too personal, and as yet too vague to be spoken, had no resource but to bear his father's contempt for what must appear merely another instance of coxcombry belonging to the schools.

"What the devil is it now? You are as mysterious as a woman!"

But nothing would induce Philip to go near those embittered men in council, committed to the side which he was not on. He entreated that his name be withheld for the present. Let Dunsmuir's affairs be settled first.

"It won't take half an hour to settle that," said the man of business. "I want to know if you will take that place; for your name will come up whether you are there or not. You will do as you please about that; the other matter I want settled."

"I will take it gladly, provided Dunsmuir be left free to discharge me as he would any other man's son, if my work should not suit."

"Very well," Mr. Norrisson assented, with the smile of a patient man who is nearing the limit of his pet virtue. "We will put it that way then. You don't want to be 'taken care of,' either; is that it?"

Philip did not explain. His father was, on the whole, more amused than displeased by his coyness. It was, as he understood it, partly youth's high conceit of itself, and partly the skittishness of a proud young novice in business, unacquainted with the practical nature of a "deal." However, as they left the house together he felt called on to straighten the young man's views on one point.

"'Foisted' is a good word," said Mr. Norrisson, "but it does n't apply to a straight demand that my son, a graduate of the Polytechnique, and the very man for the place, should have it. You understand?"

"I do," smiled Philip; "and I take back the word. And, frankly, I know that I can do the work; but I want the relation to be a pleasant one, and I don't want it to begin to-day in the midst of a discussion which may, or may not, take a happy turn. Give me time, and a fair show of pleas-

ing my chief, and I think we can hit it off."

"There is sense in that; and it 's your concern, the social part, not mine. The cañon will be your headquarters, and you don't want to live there in a bees' bike. They 're a set of outlandish, prejudiced aliens, anyhow. It 's all right; I shan't hurry you."

While Philip was dressing for dinner that evening there came a summons from the telephone. He hurried into his clothes, and went to the instrument. The call was from the company's office: one of the young men wishing to know if Dunsmuir were in town, or if any of his people were in. Philip could not say, and asked who wanted Dunsmuir.

Answer came: "His son."

"Where is his son?"

"Here. Came in to-night — engineers' team from camp."

"What camp?"

"Fielding's — Lower Snake."

"Ask him to come up here."

After an interval the reply was: "Can't do it. He 's all broke up."

"Get a carriage and bring him, some of you. I 'll find his father."

Philip rushed over to the stable where Dunsmuir kept his team; the horses were being put to. The stableman said Dunsmuir's orders were that his rig should be at the Transcon. by six o'clock. It was then ten minutes to six.

Philip jumped in beside the man, and they drove to the hotel. He was shown at once to Mr. Westerhall's rooms. The door of the parlor, at the far end of a long corridor, stood ajar, and a voice which he took to be Dunsmuir's was thundering. He could not avoid hearing the words: —

"You are in this scheme, gentlemen, for your money's worth; I am in it, now, for the sole sake of my work. Is it likely you will tamper with that? Your guarantees I have nothing to do with. I will be bound by no time-limit of your making in *my* deal with powers that are beyond your cognizance."

"I don't quite tumble to your talk of revenge," said Norrisson, apparently in reference to some previous threat of Dunsmuir's. "How — if it 's a fair question — would you propose to take it? In the courts, for instance? Because I can tell you" —

"In the people's court of the elections — I could meet you there. Bear in mind, all that your farmers want to make head against you is a leader — a man who knows something and who has nothing to lose. I have heard a word of buying their representatives; may be those gentlemen, whose politics are in their pockets, may think to buy me?"

Philip knocked twice before his father shouted "Come in!" The men were all on their feet; Dunsmuir pacing the floor, his gaunt cheek-bones reddened, his blue eyes blazing, his gray-golden hair tumbled on his head as by a wind of strife. He wheeled upon Philip, who, as no one spoke to introduce him, was forced to come bluntly out with his errand:

"I have the pleasure to tell you, sir, that your son is in town. He is at the office, asking for you."

"My son? What office? Who is this youngster?" he demanded of the company generally, without taking his eyes from Philip's face.

"My son. Your engineer, Dunsmuir, — the boy I was telling you about," said Norrisson.

Dunsmuir took no notice of Philip in either of the given characters.

"Is it a waif word you bring?" he asked, with a tremor in his deep-strung tones; "or do you come from my son, himself?"

"I bring you the message as it came by telephone from the company's office. He was there fifteen minutes ago, asking for his father. They said he was ill, and I took it on me to have him brought to our house. He will be there before we can get there. Your team is below."

"Man, are you sure here is no mistake? I cannot bear to be jostled by such news if it 's not the truth." He spoke harshly, lapsing into his Scotch accent, and Philip answered as to a woman: —

"Shall we not go and see?"

Dunsmuir began to look about the room for his hat and coat. He was holding hard against the heart-shaking message, but there was a mist before his eyes. Philip helped him to his things and almost put them on him. He found a pleasure in waiting upon him, and the omen was a good one, though he did not think of it at the time. In silence the other men drew near and shook Dunsmuir by the hand.

"I have n't been able to tell you how I have felt for you, Dunsmuir, in this business of your son," said Norrisson the father; and said Westerhall, who had a little fair-haired lad of his own across the water: —

"Our toast to-night shall be, 'Our boys; God bless them!'"

In the wagon, driving through the streets, Dunsmuir spoke, charging himself that he must get him a man to carry a message to his women-folk waiting in the cañon. "If this news be true, they cannot hear it too soon," he said.

"I will be your man," said Philip.

"Will you so? Let it be your first order, then, my bonny chiel! I have been fighting against you, I confess it; I wanted no manager's son on the work. And here you come with your coals of fire! I shall be in bonds if the mercies hold; there 's nothing slackens a man's war grip like the thought, My God has remembered me."

Philip might have asked himself, had scruples been in order, Would Dunsmuir have made him his messenger to the cañon that night if he had known how keen he was for the errand? A joy that was not all enthusiasm for the work was rising in his heart:

already he saw himself on the darkling road; he was entering the cañon by starlight; he saw the lights in the waiting house, and a girl with startled, soft gray eyes was thanking him as his news deserved.

XII.

OLD FRIENDS AND NEW ALLIES.

The physical shock Alan had suffered worked no sudden regeneration of his character, but the joy of his restoration floated the business of the compromise off the reef on which it had struck. Norrisson was now the generous host, the fatherly sympathizer, and Dunsmuir's great boom of happiness swept all contention and bitterness out of his soul. For the time he had ceased to think of his wrongs; he was ashamed to haggle about the terms of a surrender which had lost for him its vital significance. What mattered who built the ditch, or how? He blessed God that he had his son.

The question of managerial dictation to the chief engineer was not again raised; it was noticeable that all parties avoided it, and Westerhall sailed for the other side with the tacit understanding that all radical points of dispute were settled.

Alan had meant to take no advantage of

his temporary importance. The household was prostrate before him; none of the old issues were revived between him and his father, except as he himself chose to revive them, in honest contrition. He had planned a different and much humbler home-coming. He had arranged the meeting in his own mind, very modestly, if also effectively; his father was to have seen him, first, with a pick in his hand, at work with the men. Perhaps he had counted on the robe and the ring and the feasting afterward. However, it had all been taken out of his hands, and his father had only his bare word for the intentions he was not strong enough as yet to put in practice: but Dunsmuir asked nothing, not even his boy's word. It was a specious content which could not last.

Summer was advancing, ever deeper in dust. The sky was tarnished with haze. The sunsets were longer burning out in the west, in colors more tragic. The river had sunk in its bed, and the eery laugh was no more heard. There was another sound as night fell, which made music in Dunsmuir's ears — the roll of the contractor's wagon trains moving into the cañon, as the force on the work increased. By day clouds of dust,

from the slow procession of scraper-teams, hung like the smoke of an artillery engagement along the crests of the mesa. Where Dunsmuir had been wont to watch for the light of one lone cabin twinkling close to the shore, a galaxy blazed by night along both sides of the gulch above Job's cabin; and on the beach below were tents and camp-fires, and men and cattle, and all the dirt and paraphernalia of a huge contractor's outfit.

The cabin was no longer a possible place for Margaret. She lived, now, at the house, and Job camped with the force and visited her on Sundays, as he used before they were married. But they were not at home, as they had been in their bit of a room below, where Margaret was mistress and Job was man of the house. Dolly tried to lure them out of the hot kitchen into the parlor off the dining-room, where she and Margaret held their domestic consultations; but it was not the same to Margaret — going deliberately to sit there with Job in his best clothes, with nothing to do, and members of the family passing in and out with smiles of "How do you do, Job?" and affable questions about the work.

Nothing in life persists like the essential

nature of our individual needs and peculiarities; the smallest of them are often the most insistent. The household, having been drugged with extreme joy, came to itself after a while, and discovered that nothing, not even Alan, had changed: only the work had "started up" and jostled them all out of their old places; and if it had brought them the long looked for rest and triumph and security, none of the elders had yet found it out. Job missed his old importance to the work; he missed Margaret, and thought that she worked too hard; and he sorely missed his home. He was not a skilled laborer. His record counted for little in the new organization, unless Dunsmuir found time to remember it. He had not been able to procure for Job any position better than that of a "pick-handle boss" under one of the sub-contractors. Job knew that his place could be filled at a day's notice. Dunsmuir was feeling keenly his private indebtedness to these tried friends, now that he had come, apparently, into his kingdom. He had intimated to Job that the closing deal had been hard upon him, financially. Job knew the water-right had not been sustained, and was not surprised; but he asked

no questions, and Dunsmuir could not bring himself to own that he had nothing to show for his share in his own scheme, after the years he had stood under it, but his salary and a trifle of stock not presently available. Creditors, who had respected his difficulties and accepted his promises, were "jumping" on him now that he was supposed to have made a prosperous alliance. Job and Margaret were treated with the distinction conferred upon relatives, and creditors in love: they were presumed to be willing to wait, and they waited; but the situation began to be felt, even on their side, now. If Dunsmuir could have talked with them openly, he might have drawn anew upon their lasting truth and warmth of feeling; but between his pride and soreness, and their pride and shyness, and their habit of waiting for the first word to come from him, the rift widened. Dunsmuir thought that, peasant fashion, they distrusted him, and were feeling their pocket injury; Job and Margaret thought him weakly uplifted, and oblivious of the past. They pitied him, as hand workers pity the man who works with his head whose results do not check with the plain demands of life.

Meanwhile Alan, beset by the new distractions about him, fell into the old restive languor over his books. The rumor and stir of the camps fired his blood; the town was nearer than ever, with horsemen posting back and forth, and livery teams, and telegrams. He had promised himself that he would never "kick" again; but within six weeks after his pathetic home-coming he was imploring his father to give him a chance elsewhere. He brought forward an offer made him by Mr. Norrisson of a junior clerk's place in the company's office in town, on a salary which seemed riches to the boy's habitual impecuniosity. The offer had included a home for Alan in his patron's house. Norrisson had taken a fancy to the lad, had petted him enormously as his guest, prophesying him the future of a man of affairs. Dunsmuir could see how the magnificence of Norrisson's business ideas, his splendid, easy way of living, had affected Alan's imagination, as the luxury of his house affected his body, just rescued from the pit. Few things could have been harder for Dunsmuir than to see his son drift from his own control under an influence which he profoundly distrusted: but the fact had to be

faced; no more issues could be taken now. Alan must go the way of his temperament, even as Philip, from the alien house, had been drawn the way of his.

One afternoon, quite at the beginning of the cañon work, Philip had climbed the slope beneath the bluffs to paint a target for a reference point on a rock conspicuous from the opposite side. The buck-sage was out of bloom, and, though seated close to the cave, he had not thought of its neighborhood until he heard footsteps, and saw Dolly loitering toward him. She had gone to seek a missing book in that unfrequented repository, and seeing Philip at his tantalizing employment, curiosity dragged her to the spot. He took no notice till she was standing close behind him.

"That's a very queer target," said she. "What do you practice with?"

"A Buff & Berger."

"What *is* a Buff & Berger?"

"It is a kind of transit they make in Boston."

"Oh. And are you really painting that thing because you must?"

Philip had drawn a circle on the rock, and quartered it, and was now painting the opposite quadrants white and red.

"I, or some other man," he said. "Did you think I was painting it for its beauty or its deep significance?"

"Why, it might signify things," said Dolly, seating herself for conversation.

"What things, for example?"

"Of course I can't think of anything when you ask me. It might be a chief's signal, a kind of cross-tarrie, if there were anybody to rise or anything to rise for."

"There speaks the daughter of the Duinhéwassel."

"No," said Dolly, rather regretfully; "we are not a clan family, on my father's side. His forebears were Saxon and Whiggish, and nonconforming, and non-everything. They were 'kickers,' as Alan says. Of course, you know, I am no Jacobite at this late day; yet I think there was just as good praying on their side."

"And some very 'pretty men,'" said Philip, smiling. "Still, you must allow for the glamour of a lost cause. The histories for children seek rather to be picturesque, I think, than sternly just."

"They had the best songs," said Dolly, "and when we are 'children'" — she returned his playful emphasis — "we fight as we sing."

"And when we are men, we fight as our girls sing. I hear you wasting a lot of pathos, even now, on that waefu' name of Charlie."

He looked at her, as he took a fresh brushful of paint, and forced her to return his smile, which she did with the pleasing addition of a fine large blush. He could at any time make her blush, but he did not value the symptom, knowing how little a change of color or the absence of it signifies with these innocent young faces.

The blush made her suddenly serious. "I am thankful there are no such wasteful quarrels now," she said. "But the uneasy spirit never dies: when the fighting stops the schemes begin."

"Are you not friendly to the scheme?"

"To my father's?"

"To ours. They are the same?"

"Nothing else, then, is the same. And nothing is as we used to think it would be when we dreamed of the work starting up."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, the cañon. It 's quite another place to what it was. Things I used to feel and think seem nonsense to me now. I am much older."

"Three weeks?"

"Three years."

"How many places have you ever seen, outside the cañon?"

"None that I remember, unless you call the town a place."

"Why do you speak so scornfully? It is a very nice little town."

"You ought to think so, truly. It 's a sort of relative of yours; you have the same name, and the same parent, is n't that what they say?"

"Never mind what they say. Tell me some other things you have n't seen."

"But I 've never seen anything. If it 's a list of my ignorances you want I might sit here all the afternoon."

"Begin, then, by all means. Have you ever seen — the flag of your country, officially displayed?"

"Which is my country, I wonder? Alan says he would fight for the Stars and Stripes; but I should go with my father."

"Better postpone the decision till after your marriage."

"I shall never marry on that side, flag or no flag."

"*Bien*, but why?" asked Philip, opening his eyes.

"Well, I should not care to marry beneath a certain class, the class I 'm supposed to belong to," she argued seriously; "yet I have not been bred like the women of that class. I should never feel at home with them."

"But what can you know of them?"

"Oh, I have studied them for years; in the novels, you know, and in Punch — the tall girls with high shoulders and short upper lips, and the young men with their insolent Greek profiles."

"But you were speaking of the women."

"The women, of course; the duchess, and the husband-hunting mammas, and the little nobodies who are trying to get on, and the rude somebodies who crush them whenever they get the chance, and the flirting old maids, and the masher, and the dean" —

"And have you taken them seriously?"

"Why should n't I? They must be true, else how do you explain their tremendous vogue? Should you think a provincial stranger would be happy among them? Fancy their charity, their 'amenities;' how they would feel another's woe and hide the fault they see! My accent would be wrong, I should n't know their talk, and they would

never care to know mine; and if I tried to be like them I should be affected."

Philip dissembled his intense amusement, and answered, "You are thinking of types."

"Well, I should be a type. When one is in the right place one is taken as a matter of course. It is n't thought necessary to whisper, 'She grew up in a cañon!' No; I 'd rather dream of the Old Country and call it home, than go there to find myself without a country."

"When you speak of the Old Country do you mean England or Scotland?"

"Both; but I was born in India, in the Punjab, in the great days of my father's work. I wish he had stayed where they know what an engineer is. Here his record counts for nothing; he might as well be a tinker. Anybody who can run a hand level is an engineer in America."

"Thanks," said Philip. "*I* am an American engineer."

Dolly nodded at him very sweetly. "I have no prejudices," she assured him; and when Philip laughed aloud, she was quite mystified. "I used to dream of nothing," she went on, "but how my father was ever to get this work done. I used to long for

the power to help him. You know a girl's only way to get power is to marry it," she confided to him, as a great discovery. "I mean a girl like me, with no education, or genius of her own. Yes; it was actually one of my make-believes — I must have been in pinafores. There should come a rich traveler to visit the cañon who would be astonished at my father's daughter. I should have been, not as I am, you know, but a dark-eyed, red and white wonderful beauty. But I would not listen to him till he had promised to back my father's scheme."

"He was to purchase your hand, then, by building the ditch?"

"Of course; what else?"

"Was there a heart anywhere in the business?"

"There was his heart. Do you think I would marry a man that did not care for me?"

"And where was your heart, meanwhile?"

"With my blessed, dear daddy," exclaimed Dolly, with perfect self-satisfaction.

"And these are the dreams of girlhood in a cañon! You must have read some very silly books."

"Is n't it a woman's duty to help her family?"

"It is her first duty to be honest, if she can."

"If we had always been free we might have been honest."

"'Is that a tale ye borrow'?" Philip retorted, "'or is 't some words ye 've learned by rote'?"

Dolly was caught by the quotation, which she was pleased to call felicitous, and omitted to observe that Philip's reply was merely an evasion.

He continued to question her, enjoying the frank side-lights of biography her answers shed upon the family past.

"And was Alan born under the Stars and Stripes, that he should declare for America?"

"No; not he. We are twins, did you not know? After India we lived in a stupid house in Bedford Park, while papa was looking up his scheme in this country. Sometimes we went to the sea and sometimes to Dalgarnie, my grandmother's house in the north. Margaret tells us about those places till I think I can remember; but of course I cannot. I was but three

when we came to the cañon; and there is something deadening in the sight of these bluffs that never change, and these lights and winds and sounds that go on from year to year. I wonder we are not all a little touched. I think we are a wee bit off, each one of us in a way of our own."

She crowded herself closer into a hollow of the slope, clasping her knees and talking in a sing-song, drowsy monologue to the tune of the river and the breeze stirring the dry hill-grasses above their heads. Philip stole a look at her from time to time, and wantonly nursed his job.

"Yes; I surely think we have been at times a little warped," she mused aloud, encouraged by his silence. "There used to be a sound — I think you have never heard it — a sound inside of all other sounds, like a ringing in the ears; I cannot describe it. We used to hear it when the river talked at night. Well, you cannot think how I used to dread that sound; it was like a wicked laugh. Margaret said it was 'unchancy.' And now it seems such perfect nonsense. I wonder I 'm not ashamed to tell you. But the spell is broken now."

"I would have had it last, long enough to

include me," said Philip. "And so the cañon is quite spoiled, you think?" he questioned, half jealously.

"I did not say spoiled; not the same."

"Still, you would not have liked to stay here as it was?"

"I should have had to, I fancy, whether I liked it or not. I could have kept my make-believes. Now I don't care for them any more."

"Ah," murmured Philip. "And the rich traveler — what would you say to him now?"

"I don't need him now: the work is going on without him."

"But if the work should stop; how then? Would you be ready to make that same bargain?"

"I told you I was a child."

"Tell me some other things you used to think when you were a child."

"You would laugh."

"Never! Am I such a Philistine? Do you think I have no bees in my own bonnet?"

"Have you ever heard the cañon-bird?" asked Dolly, shyly.

"Once — twice; never since the work began."

"You have noticed that, too? I think it does not like the work; and I am so sorry."

"Is the bird supposed to be a sort of omniscience that has to be propitiated?"

"I knew you would laugh!"

"But it is you who are laughing."

"Do you know — there is no such bird."

"You mean it is not set down in the bird books?"

"Not that we can find. And not one of us has ever traced the song. It is a shy singer; its voice, if you 've noticed, comes from far away, for all it 's so piercing. We hear it only in shady, quiet places like the poplars or the big cut, or up in the shadow of the bluffs; and no one has ever heard it beyond the cañon. It was after we had the sorrow here: my mother was taken, and then it began to be heard, and only in those places that she loved. This I have never said to any one. When I was a little girl I used to think it meant that I was doing right or was going to be happy, whenever I heard the bird. It was my four-leaved clover, my new moon over the right shoulder. Did I not tell you we are a little touched?"

After a silence, Philip said: "Do you remember the first time that you deigned to

look at me? You stood below the bluffs, and we heard the bird."

"Oh, if you mean that time! I was n't looking at you at all. I was looking at Alan," said Dolly, disingenuously; and as she spoke came the rare, piercing, faltering note, dropping through the silence. She could not help but look at him now; and Philip blessed the bird.

XIII.

A BULLET WITH A BILLET.

"I HAVE something for you," said Philip one day on his return from town, handing a neat parcel to Dolly.

"A jeweler's box for me? Who can it be from?"

"The rich traveler, I think, must be not far off. Seebright said it was for 'some of the cañon folks,' and as it seems to be a woman's toy I conclude it must be for you."

Dolly was in a twitter of curiosity as she opened the velvet box and turned its contents out upon her palm. The bauble's weight was more than she was prepared for; it fell, and rolled the length of the room.

"What an odd thing! Whatever can it be meant for?"

"To hang about your neck, apparently," said Philip, examining it as he picked it up. It was in size, shape, and weight the pattern of a rifle-ball, polished, and gilded, and

pierced to receive the loop of a slender gold chain; and round the middle went a gold band engraved with a legend in Spanish, which Philip translated at Dolly's command.

"He 's a Don, you see, not an English somebody; and he says that 'Love flourishes from a wound.'"

"What rubbish!" cried Dolly, blushing. "Have n't you heard something like that before?"

"Remarks of that kind are not expected to be original; and he may have been hampered in his observations by the very trifling circumference of a bullet. Do bullets stand for arrows in the language of the western *amoroso?*"

"How do you know he is western? He knows Spanish, it seems."

"He adapts it vilely from the Latin. '*Virescit vulnere virtus*' is the fountain of his wit. Dolly, it 's come to a pretty pass; people turning virtue into love on your account!"

"You know that it can have nothing to do with me." Dolly began to look teased. "What does Seebright say?"

"He says that one of his assistants took the order, and the young man's amusements overcame him somewhat, and he mixed his

labels up, and has since been fired. All the direction on the box was 'The Cañon.'"

"It might be some joke of Alan's — the expensive chiel!" mused Dolly. "But I never knew Alan meddle with sentiment, and he could never have got his verb right."

"Alan's Spanish is improving," said Philip. "Did you know he was taking lessons?"

"No, I did not. And who is his teacher?"

"My father's cook."

"His Spanish, then, will match his English," sighed Dolly.

"Not at all. Enrique prides himself. He can turn a phrase as neatly as an omelet; he is a professional writer of love-letters, moreover, and by his own account he has plenty of practice."

"Dear me, are there so many of them — those Mexicans?"

"They may be stronger in feeling than in numbers."

"I hope Alan does not go amongst them," said Dolly, looking troubled. "I hear that the Vargas family have moved to town; and if Alan should be careless, and forget his promise" —

"What promise?"

"Why, you know, about Antonia Vargas helping him out of the cave. Her family would take it very ill if Alan should make it common talk."

"He might placard the town with it," laughed Philip; "not one in a hundred would ever believe the story. I should n't myself, only for the letter in evidence."

"What would you have believed, pray?" asked Dolly, offended by his joking.

"I should have thought the lad must have been a trifle mixed about the time he saw an angel in petticoats descending, hand over hand, thirty feet on a half-inch rope. Try it yourself, some time."

"I don't see what difference it makes what anybody believes. Antonia knows what she did, and whether she wants it talked of. Alan is so careless, and I feel that somehow Pacheco shadows him still."

"Pacheco has made it impossible for himself to come back. He has stolen a horse, which is worse for him, I understand, than to have killed his man."

"Pacheco is betrothed to Antonia Vargas. He will come back for her."

"Are you sure of that?"

"So they say; and she defended him with a pistol."

"A countryman is a countryman; and it may have been her Mexican idea of hospitality."

"Alan ought to be very careful," Dolly repeated.

"By the way, was the bullet taken from Alan's arm, do you know; or did it pass clean through?"

"Alan has the bullet; he is prouder of it than" — Their eyes met. "You do not think?" Dolly questioned, flushing hotly.

"It was just a fancy," said Philip; "and I am not very proud of it. Still, as a joke, you know."

"Alan is not that sort of boy at all," pronounced Dolly. "You make me wretched."

"Come, now, I did n't say that he was. But I did hear Alan say, once, that if ever he met Pacheco's girl he would give her back her bullet."

"Don't you think you had better make some inquiries?"

"Of Alan? Hardly."

"Of Seebright, perhaps."

"I think," said Philip, "that I shall spend more of my evenings in town."

"Oh, thank you!" Dolly raised her eyes, full of warmest gratitude, to his.

"Do you think me an offensive prig? I feel quite an old fellow of my years with Alan."

"Oh, Alan is a perfect child; and sometimes a perfect hoodlum. But don't you think he is a dear?"

"I think he is very nearly related to a dearer than dear."

"Please don't try to be funny; I want to think," said Dolly.

"Wait, and do your thinking to-night; or leave it to me. There is one little fault I have to find with the cañon family" —

"I should think you might have found several." Dolly tried to look indifferent.

"Not a fault, perhaps, but a tendency. You take things —most things — too seriously."

"Oh!"

"And some things not seriously enough."

"As, for instance?"

"The fact that I am exiling myself of evenings, when the cañon is most the cañon to me, all for your brother's sake, who will not thank me, — far from it, — and you see nothing in it at all!"

"I would do as much for you."

"Thanks. For my brother, supposing I had one?"

"For either. If you needed such companionship or influence as mine, I should think nothing of giving it, at any cost. I should feel so flattered to have been of use."

"Why do you assume that I don't need it? As a fact, I am distinctly preferring another's needs to my own."

"Because" — Dolly hesitated, blushed, and broke into a smile — "because you seem to think you want it. Now the thing we want is very seldom the thing we need."

"Who told you that, pray? You got it out of books, where you get all your strained, conventional notions of self-sacrifice. Not that I blame you; all self-centred people grow morbid in solitude, and your still waters have bred lilies, while some would have bred ugly weeds."

Dolly put aside the words with a gesture of disgust. "I hate to be discussed!" she exclaimed. "What can it matter? Weeds or lilies, we are always a collection of curiosities you have unearthed and are studying at your leisure. I am very tired of it."

"And I am tired of being totally and al-

ways misunderstood, and treated as a stranger. Now, to-night, if I should be late to dinner, why should you not sit with me, as you would with Alan or your father? What is my position in the household?"

"Margaret says you are 'just an apprentice, nae mair,'" said Dolly, wickedly.

"Very well; then why not give me my meals with the men?"

"I will sit with you," Dolly relented, "if you are n't too late. I will bring a book — as I do with Alan."

"If you do, I shall take the book away."

"Indeed, will you?"

"Just try me. If you come to keep me company with a book, miss, that book is forfeit, and the penalty I shall name, and take."

"I wish you would take this." Dolly held out the box at arm's length; Philip took it and her hand with it.

"What manners!" she exclaimed. "I think Margaret was right — 'an apprentice, nae mair!'" and she fled before Philip could make reprisals.

During their first weeks together in the cañon the young people had behaved maturely, talking in well-constructed sentences about books and manners and the conduct

of life; and Philip told Dolly about his schooldays and vacations abroad, and compared the apparent fullness of his experience with the narrowness of hers, of which she was much ashamed; and contrasted the slightness and poverty of his intimacies with her constant, warm, concentrated life of home, which she took as a matter of course, and he considered a marvel of preciousness and unusualness. But youth and gayety and the high-tide of summer weather, and the propinquity of morning, noon, and night in the same small house, soon brought them to a pass which included romps and quarrels, and flights of ecstasy unaccounted for; and Philip, who always spoke of Miss Dunsmuir to the young lady's father, called her Dolly to herself, and felt toward her as to a darling, irresistible child, and sometimes as to a young goddess, far beyond his reach.

He had missed, through his mother's theories of education, all those girl-friendships which had been his birthright, which he had not lost his taste for, nor forfeited his right to enjoy. Beautiful girls and women he had met in all the ways conventionally prescribed, some of them sufficiently intimate; but never had he assisted a pretty girl in a white

apron, with her hair pushed into a cap, perched on the library steps, to dust and arrange her father's bookshelves; or watched her whip meringues or ice a cake, or train her wind-blown roses, or ransack trunks in an attic under the brown eaves, or mount a restless pony — for Dolly's drilling in this feat had fallen to him instead of to Alan, as legitimately planned. He had seen her in all her very few and simple home frocks, but never in a dinner or dancing dress. He had done everything with her but the conventional thing — from fighting her futile theories of life, to laying a fire on the hearth, or sitting by and measuring the spaces while she changed the buttons on his riding coats; which, with his life of constant exercise in the light air of the plains, were getting all too tight in the chest and too loose in the waist. He had taken into his own hands those little services which a brother can perform for a sister, or pungently neglect; and Philip neglected nothing. Such privileges had been too rare in his life to be undervalued; and of course the particular girl made a difference. Dolly was unique: a surprise every day, in that she could be both so childish beyond belief, and so deliciously womanly

as almost to bring the tears to his eyes. Most of all he prized his evenings — for then she was all woman — on the wan sands where the river's "curmurring" forced them to be silent, or up among the pierced shadows of the poplars, or up again in the solemn, clear light that brooded on the bluffs.

In keeping a brotherly watch over Alan's evenings Philip had lost many an evening of his own; but now and then the sacrifice was richly rewarded. He and Alan began those rides together which the boy had once coveted; miles of twilight country they covered, silent for the most part, Philip, in spirit, with Dolly by his side. He had never yet had the chance to ride with her, and so he was always scheming and dreaming about it. One evening she drove down with her father and the cañon family dined all together in town. Mr. Norrisson was absent, and Philip did the honors with fastidious recklessness. He had spent the better part of the day elaborating his preparations; he had arranged the flowers in his mother's dressing-room, — hers in name, though she had never entered it, — heaping roses upon roses wherever roses would go, and choosing with difficult fancy the most beauteous ones for Dolly's bouquet.

He knew how she would come, in her little home-made habit, and he exulted in thinking of her dear simplicity in contrast to the stupid braveries of that money-built house. He was at pains to make the contrast as great as possible, that he might gloat upon her difference, which she neither understood nor knew to value.

She had been a full hour in the house, and Philip was wondering what should keep her so unconscionably long upstairs. Now Dolly had never in her life before been in such a splendid room, so intricately arranged for the gratification of the exterior life of woman, the adornment of her person, and her study of that person when adorned. Never had she seen herself so plenteously, repeatedly reflected in mirrors, long, and wide, and multiple. She was standing in front of one of these, stepping back and forth, smiling in a curious, surprised intimacy with her own full-length figure, when Philip knocked at the door, begging her to make a little haste.

"Has papa come?"

"Not yet; but may n't I speak to you? I want to ask you" — Dolly opened the door: her cheeks were scarlet, her eyes brilliant

yet shy — "I want to ask what you think of this room. It was done by a famous decorator who has never seen his work; nor has my mother, for whom it was intended."

"What would my opinion be worth? I have never seen anything but our poor rooms. I am thinking how strange that we should be here! You will never know how strange, that *I* should be here."

"In the palace of the Beast?" Their eyes, meeting, took away the scoff from the words. "I know more than you think; more perhaps than you know yourself."

"Well, it does n't matter," said Dolly, absently. "We are the changelings of the scheme. What you have I might have had, perhaps; but I never cared — until now. Now I care, sometimes."

"For what do you care?"

Dolly frowned in her way when she was disposed to be very practical.

"Do you know, I think to-day will be a good time for you to put me through my dinner paces."

"What in the world do you mean?"

"I don't think you realize quite how provincial I am — what a perfect desert-islander. I have never dined in a fine house

in my life, and dinner fashions are always changing; our cañon ways must be far behind. To-day we shall be by ourselves, and I shall not mind your correcting me if I make mistakes. But, perhaps," she hesitated, "of course it will not be a swell dinner for only us."

"Such as you will find it, the house can do no more," Philip assured her, gravely. "The table is in full regalia; Enrique has been commanded to sacrifice to his gods; Wong has every stitch of canvas set; he rustles like a Channel breeze; myself you see in riding dress, but only to match yourself."

"How nice of you!" cried Dolly. "Then we can have a regular rehearsal — wanting the clothes; but the clothes will not matter. Mind, now, that you watch me!"

"Dolly, you are growing terribly ambitious. You are thinking of that Englishman, confound him! You are preparing to meet the duchess and the masher."

"No," said Dolly, sincerely, with a shade of trouble in her voice; "I am only comparing myself, that ought to be a lady, with ladies who belong in a room like this. If you will believe me, I don't even know what half of these things are for!"

"If by those 'ladies' you mean my mother," said Philip, forced to be serious though he wanted to catch her in his arms and call her a precious little goose, "I can tell you that when she was your age she had no such room as this, which, by the way, she disdains; she was breaking colts, like a young Diana, on the range; and if she had a four-bit hand-glass to do her back hair in, it was as much as she had. And she was happy then — and, I am told, made others happy."

"But of course she must have wanted all these things, by instinct, before she ever knew what they were."

"Are you afraid you have n't the instincts of a lady? Pity you are such a little savage! My mother wanted, always has wanted, the thing beyond. So do I. Would you like a room like this, Dolly?"

"I certainly should like a few of those acres of wardrobes. I spend my life trying to find places to put things. And I confess there is a fascination in a long mirror."

"I should think there might be — for some persons."

"It is n't altogether vanity. You can't think how awkward it is never to have seen how one's skirts hang. Not that there would

be much pleasure in it, for mine seem to hang very badly."

"When you are not in them."

"Why do you say those things? It is n't like you, and I don't enjoy it."

"You must get used to it if you are going to be a society girl."

"There you are unjust. Why should I not wish to know all the ways? You may think I shall never have need of any but my own; but I was not born in a cañon."

"Dolly, my — well, it is useless! Words are useless. You could never understand — I mean, there is but one way to make you. Will you take my arm?"

"Why should I?"

"Because it is supposed to be the thing to do."

"Oh," said Dolly, meekly, and took it. She was visibly wrought upon by her surroundings in a way that might have amused Philip more, but that the world of things had had such serious meanings for his mother, who was a priestess of bric-à-brac, and studied her surroundings as if the art of life, like that of the stage, largely consisted in how one is costumed and in what chair one shall sit — and he grudged this

cult its possible importance in the girl's fresh fate.

"There is another thing," she agitated dreamily, as they passed down the wide, thick-carpeted stairs. They had halted on the landing to get the effect of the hall below, and the light of a colored window threw flaming gules and amber and tints of serpent green on her pale golden hair and dark-clad shoulders.

"What is this other thing? Something wicked and worldly, of course."

"No; only just human. Dancing is the right of every girl that lives and moves, and I can never dance because there is no way to learn. And what shall I do if ever I go where dancing is? My heart would break with the music! Surely it 's as bad to be foot-tied as tongue-tied; and they talk of nightingales heart-stifled in their dells!"

"This is very serious," said Philip. "I perfectly agree with you; dancing is more a girl's right than silver-backed brushes and acres of wardrobe. But what 's to be done about it?"

"Do *you* know how to dance?"

"I was supposed to once."

"Ah, then could you teach me — I mean, *would* you?"

"Would I? well, I think I would with some persuasion — '*con mil amores*,'" he murmured under his breath, pressing the arm that lay in his against his side.

Dolly pushed herself away from him angrily: —

"I should like to know what excuse you had to answer me like that."

"You asked if I would teach you" —

"And you might have said yes or no, as a gentleman would."

"Well?"

"But you answer offensively, in words you could n't say in English."

"Could n't I! Would you like to hear how they sound in English? I told you the simple truth. Would I teach you to dance, you asked me, and I said I would with a thousand loves — and I will, with a thousand thousand! To dance or to anything else I know and it befits you to know."

"Befits! I have no words — I declare I cannot tell you how I *hate* the way you treat me! Your insufferable patronage, your air of being always so superior — and then your stupid school-boy freedoms! If I am serious, you make fun of me; if I play, you take advantage. I wish you would do either the one thing or the other."

"Yes," breathed Philip. "Only tell me which."

"Either leave me alone entirely, or treat me — treat me like a woman — a person of sense."

Dolly sat down in a dolorous heap on the landing step, and buried her face in her handkerchief; her shoulders shook as if she were crying.

"I will, Dolly." He took the place on the step beside her. "How shall I treat this person of sense?"

"You spoil everything. You are making fun of me now," Dolly sobbed, and by the same impulse began to laugh immoderately.

Philip waited till she became quieter. "If I am to treat you like a woman, dear, I shall have to spoil things more — very much indeed. And things might be a good deal worse between us — worse for me. That is why I am waiting."

Dolly, with her face still hidden, shook her head impatiently.

"To be plain with you is one way," he continued. "The other is simply impossible. It 's no use pretending I could live in the same house with you and leave you alone

entirely; I 'm not 'superior' enough for that. Shall we be serious, then? I know I often hit the wrong note trying to make sounds that mean nothing, because I have to avoid the one note that would go to my soul. Would it spoil things very much if you knew that I love you, dear?"

Dolly would not look up. He could see only a bit of her neck, above the collar, and the curve of one little crimson ear.

"I shall ask for nothing. But please get used to the fact. Come, take my hand! It need not worry you or make any difference; only remember, and forgive me when I blunder. And let us talk and laugh and quarrel as we did before. Why do you hide your face? Am I never to look at you again?"

"Not at dinner," Dolly specified.

"Not at dinner, then: but shall we not ride?"

"Oh, yes," she sighed in a tone of relief. "I wish we were on horseback now."

It was Saturday night, and they rode to the cañon, the three young ones together, Dunsmuir taking the team home alone. Alan rode ahead, and sometimes he sang in his loud, expressionless tenor; and Philip

noted that he had a new song, a very tender one — "*Aforrado de mi vida.*" It suited Philip exquisitely; it voiced his aching dream. "Lining of my life;" "slender bit lassie;" soul of the mystic soul of beauty; dear little human comrade without whom the lights and shadows of the world were nothing; foretold to her lover by every hope, withheld by every fear!

She rode with her face to the west; her pale face, her hands, her hair, were luminous as flowers at evening in a dusk border. Over the west, from horizon to zenith, spread a marvelous copper-pink glow, a light without a shadow, while all the land beneath was dark. Low in that sublimated west Venus shone forth at her setting, the one star in the heavens, though crowds awaited the lifting of twilight's colored curtain. The radiance deepened; it changed to a lurid, brassy hue. The sage-green hills turned livid; the aspens shivered and paled against the cold, purple east. The night-wind, creeping down the gulches, breathed its first long sough.

They checked their horses, and signed to one another to look at the hills. Slowly the strange refulgence was withdrawn; diffus-

ing, to concentrate later on a lower key, to pause and softly brighten to the tender verge of starlight: and then the wind would blow, and no heart not strong in happiness could bear that senseless riot and rapture, prolonged throughout the night, under wild reaches of midnight sky, under the white stride of the Milky Way; with soundings of the river's stops; with whisperings amidst the poplars' dusky files — cowled shapes against the dark, closing and parting, with rifts of stars between. As their horses jostled down the sidling trails, often his knee was against her saddle-girth; and once he took her hand, silently, without question, and she let it stay, while she made hurried little speeches about the view, which he did not attempt to answer. His heart was full; he took deep breaths of resolution to be patient, — perhaps even generous, — since, until the work was done, all the cañon days, and most of the evenings, were his in which to win one little girl who had seen no one else (Dolly's chances were not so many that he need have hurried her). But never would he allow her to pass the cañon's bounds without her promise given. How would the story of the Sleeping Beauty have

ended had the Prince waited to tell his love until the Princess had awakened to more than just himself and the dull old palace of her dreams? If all the world loves a lover, all the world knows that he is selfish.

XIV.

ANOTHER BREAK IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

MARGARET felt herself superseded, in these days, and thought that the pressure of waiting was nothing to the estrangements of success. Dolly was sweet, sometimes over-sweet, in speech and manner; but she was absent in mind, variable in spirits, inconstant about her work, and less and less with Margaret, as time went on, and more and more with Philip. Matters went often "agley" in the housekeeping. The marketing, which had been Job's business in town, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, was now the business of no one in particular, where everybody was so driven by the work. Mistakes were made, and there were loose expenditures that harrowed Margaret's soul. There was a constant bustle of coming and going, and company not expected, and meals out of season. After the petty routine of years, Margaret had lost the knack of doing things quickly. And Dunsmuir was one

who hated explanations. He never listened to them, never gave them if he could help it. Thus he misunderstood many little domestic situations, which he settled offhand, peremptorily and sometimes unjustly, sooner than talk things over, as the women loved to do. But Margaret could no longer count upon Dolly. It goes hard with one lone woman when the child of her arms who once understood understands no longer, or has ceased, perhaps, to care. Once Margaret had had her douce little man every night to comfort her with his wise silence and moderate judgment, but now she saw him only Sundays, in a constrained, unhomelike way; she would not take this time to complain of things too trivial to be saved up; yet they made the sum of a strain which was beginning to tell upon her temper and health and spirits.

It had not occurred to Dolly that Margaret could have anything to complain of. She had never asked, but she supposed that her father must have paid his debt; what could he be doing else with his salary, which seemed wealth to Dolly? She knew nothing of the cost of Western living, nor of the debts in town to people who were not so patient as Job and Margaret, or not so help-

less. The wash was supposed, now, to go below to a Chinaman at the camp; but Margaret had heard of the heathen custom of mouth-sprinkling, and, week by week, she snatched from pollution what she called the pick of the wash, and did it herself, and got little credit for doing it. She saw with dismay that the bed and table linen were going fast, nor could Dunsmuir be induced to replace them, according to her ideas of economy, with cheaper stuff, fit to be tossed about in the common wash and whipped to rags on the line by winds that came laden with dust.

"Have we no more linen in the house?" Dunsmuir would demand, when Margaret mentioned buying. There was linen, to be sure, a sacred store laid by in trust for Dolly — Margaret would have been ashamed, indeed, of her stewardship had there not been fine old glossy damask, and sheeting wide and heavy, with beautiful embroidered markings, tied with ribbons, in piles of dozens and half-dozens, and fragrant with dried rose-leaves and with lavender. But long before she had got through this explanation, Dunsmuir would cut her short.

"Use what we have. What are you saving it for, woman? Do ye think I cannot

buy my daughter her marriage linen, if ever she come to want it?"

"May be, then, ye 'll ken how many pund sterling went t' the fillin' of thae kists ye 're sae blythe of emp'ying."

But though Margaret had in a measure her say, she had not her will. No more linen was bought, and she was forced to visit the "kists" more than once, reducing the sacred hoard, at what cost to her pride and her feelings no one in the house took the trouble to understand. Dolly had taken an irritating way of rousing herself, periodically, to an unwonted critical interest in the house, when she would do over portions of Margaret's work without advising her or stating her objections. This was as much as the older woman could bear; and at times she saw no good reason why she should stay where even her work failed to satisfy. Yet she felt that never had Dolly needed her as now, though the child knew it not. Margaret watched her, in her light but perilous intercourse with the first young stranger she had known, distrusting Philip, distrusting the powers of nature to protect Dolly from piteous delusions, distrusting the whole connection, business and social, with

the sinister house of Norrisson. She would stand her ground, was her determination, though all should feel her in the way. Both Dunsmuir and Dolly were as children, misled and bedazed, in Margaret's eyes.

Meanwhile a trouble of her own was creeping upon her, and she failed to read the warnings. Job had come, one Sunday, in a sad condition of bruises; she was ashamed to have him seen of the family. He had had a fall, he told her: but it seemed a simple thing, for a man of his age, to tumble off his own cabin steps in broad day. She upbraided him for clumsiness; she even suspected a more discreditable cause, and repented the suspicion afterward with tears. On another Sunday he complained of his head, and spoke heavily of the work as though it were too much for him. Margaret thought her man was getting babyish; it ill consorted with their circumstances that he should be discouraged with work at fifty-five. It fretted her that he seemed to grow forgetful of things she told him, of messages and errands; his slowness of speech seemed to have affected his comprehension. She was often impatient with him, often irritable, while he grew more stolid, it seemed,

and often slept away the greater part of the one day they had together. More than once he spoke as if he expected her to keep house for him in the autumn, at their homestead, quite as if she were a young, untrammeled girl. It irritated her, after all that had come and gone, to have to explain that she could not leave her child alone in a family of men-folk, with a Chinaman in the kitchen who would take advantage and waste the food and fuel, and break the dishes and hide the pieces, and warp the brooms, and use the best towels to clean the paint. Job should know these things without words; and the words were forgotten by the next Sunday, and the delusion abided that she belonged to none but him, and was free to go when he asked her. She was the more round with him that she was conscious herself of a secret leaning toward the same folly. Both she and Job were too old to work at the pleasure of others. They needed their own times, and to work in their own way. This Margaret felt, but saw no way to indulge the weakness; and she had no more hesitation in sacrificing Job to the family than herself, for was he not her "man"?

One Sunday he told her that she must

make up her mind, for that he had given notice of his intention to "quit" work for the company. Word had gone forth that the water would be down as far as his land by the following spring, and if they were to benefit by it, it was none too soon to get their land in shape. He had waited too many years now, he said, to lose the first season.

Margaret was astonished at Job's forth-puttingness, venturing to make such a decision without consulting her. However, the thing was done; he could not be off and on with a job like that. It gave some shadow of excuse, she was weak enough to own, to her own desertion. The bitterest part of that business was the evidence of her senses, sharpened by feeling, that no one felt the parting as she did. Dolly did not realize — how should she, who had always had a Margaret? — what it would be not to have one. And she was as happy as a child in the prospect of visiting Margaret in her own house; she had never had a place to visit. She was busy, too, sorting over her closets and bureaus for little additions to Margaret's humble outfit; jellies and canned fruits and dishes that could be spared, and towels and napkins and pillows, from the

hoard Margaret had guarded. These things Margaret flatly refused, with a flushed and tearful face, — would she rob the house, indeed! — but they were packed and smuggled into the wagon without her knowledge.

Nothing, since Alan's frank desertion to the commercial side of the scheme, had hurt Dunsmuir like the sight of that honest pair, with their boxes and humble effects piled around them, jolting out of sight down the cañon road, with the knowledge they would never come back as they went. It would so have comforted Job and Margaret had they known; but Dunsmuir was too proud to dwell upon his sentiments to these people to whom he owed hard money. In a month or two he hoped to make all square; he would take that opportunity to speak of the greater debt — the one beyond return.

XV.

AT THE KITCHEN DOOR.

MARGARET had been able to choose her successor, a young woman who presented herself with an appositeness which might have been called providential but for the drawback of a ten-months-old baby. Margaret made light of the baby in comparison with the baby's dire alternative, a Chinaman; and the family assented. No one likes to think one's self so inhuman as to mind a baby. A baby, Margaret claimed, steadies a young woman and gives her ambition; she had seen a slender bit nursing mother go through the same work, and find time to rest and tidy herself, that "twa jaukin' hizzies wad be dallyin' with the lee-lang day." The young woman's husband was busy, like Job, getting his land in shape for the water, which had been promised by the following spring.

It was several weeks before the admission crept out that the baby was getting oppres-

sive. They continued to give themselves credit for the feelings proper to the baby and to Jenny, who was doing her best to combine her natural duties with those for which she was paid. The baby was a splendid, great, fair, brown-eyed boy baby; they were the ideal settler's wife and child, the very people for whom the canal was building. All this made it harder to confess that so appropriate a connection was far from comfortable. Dolly, who had entered with girlish enthusiasm into the scheme, had won Jenny's heart at the outset by her sweet, inviting ways with the baby, of whose position in the family the mother was naturally jealous; but Dolly's success was her own undoing — the baby screamed to go to her whenever he saw her in the distance. She had pleased him too well; she had rashly admitted him to her own part of the house, far more attractive than the kitchen, and thereafter, short of downright forcible expulsion, he was not to be denied. He could creep faster than a clock ticks, and as, in the summer weather, doors were left wide, the sound of his scuffling toes and his bubbles and guggles of delight became a comic source of terror. She felt constrained to keep up her charac-

ter, too ambitiously assumed. She sympathized with Jenny, and tried dishonestly to persuade her that the baby was no trouble to any one ; and between specious protestations to the mother, tyrannous exactions on the part of the baby, and her own secret dismay, Dolly's path became daily more complicated and arduous.

Philip despised the baby because it took up precious moments of Dolly's time that he had formerly been able to monopolize. Dunsmuir found all his autocratic habits trampled upon by that terrible, sunny-headed radical, who was always underfoot when he was not in Dolly's arms, or swinging by his mother's skirts, or pulling things off the kitchen table, or mixing himself up in squalid fashion with the sacred ceremonies of dinner, or digging holes in the flower-beds, or strewing the piazza floor with his idols, — bits of coal or chicken bones or mumbled crusts of bread, — and leaving indispensable parts of his clothing about in conspicuous places, to be hastily gotten rid of or futilely ignored. The young settler had a habit of screaming at meal-times, occasions which seemed to excite him and to remind him of his own infringed rights. Jenny would dash in and

out with a flushed face and a high-strung manner, the tension of her nerves increasing with the baby's notorious demands. In her brief disappearances she would catch him up violently and remove him farther and farther from his audience in the dining-room, scolding till both his heart and her own were quite broken. When his cries came forlornly from his place of banishment in the woodshed, Dolly, unable to bear the appearance of heartlessness any longer, would rise to the rescue, and the meal would end distractedly for all. Dolly began secretly to dislike the baby, almost to wish some reasonable fault could be found with Jenny, as an excuse for terminating a relation so exposing to all her own unsuspected weaknesses. It was humiliating to think how little Margaret would have made of this pother about a baby. Her hands would never have been too clean, nor her gowns too fresh and fine, to nurse him, the young rascal, when his mother needed relief.

It was helplessly agreed, in the family, that to send away Jenny for no fault but that she was a mother would be too monstrous; but they were ripe for any desperate measure of relief. Jenny had a young sister, a lass of

twelve, whom it was now proposed to have up from town, to mind the baby and betimes to help Jenny with her work. But wages, it proved, were no object to Jenny's parents, compared to the loss of a winter's schooling for their youngest daughter. They were a nomadic, tent-and-wagon family, and therefore the more regardful of educational opportunities when they came in their way. In extremity, Dolly offered to remove the difficulty by herself undertaking to teach the lass; and so it was arranged. Two hours each day she gave to the sowing of seed on that wild and stony soil, and very profitable, on the whole, was the exercise — to the teacher. But Philip rebelled against these baffling and separating influences. The atmosphere of the household was changed; it was no longer feudal and concentrated. Other matters besides the work had started up, with much intrusive bustle, and Dolly was serving a housekeeper's apprenticeship instead of falling sweetly and securely in love.

On one of the evenings when Philip dined in town, chance presented him with an awkward discovery. Alan had gone with a party of young girls to a play given by a

traveling company. Philip was not much concerned for the lad's sentimental relations in these days, although the latter had confessed to having returned Antonia Vargas her bullet; the confession being incident to his having had to borrow of Philip to pay for mounting the same. He claimed to have sent it partly as a joke, — a trifle fervid in the accompanying sentiment, possibly; but a girl accustomed, in her own language, to the metaphorical kissing of hands and feet, could not be supposed to take umbrage at a word, though strong.

He had cudgeled his wits for days, he said, and looked through stacks of books for a text not exceeding in space one inch of engraver's small script; but nothing could he find to the purpose of a wound but that stale bit of Latin. Virtue would not go, of course, and gratitude had sounded a trifle prudent. Such had been Alan's explanation, if sincere, and Philip had no reason to doubt him.

He was smoking at the window of his bedroom, in the wing, opening on a grass court in rear of the house. On the kitchen porch below Enrique was conversing with a shy figure, lately known on the streets of the town as a peddler of tomales. She was a

bent old woman with a brown face, which she kept well hidden under the peaked hood of her invariable black shawl. Twice a week she brought tomales and enchillalas to the house, and gossiped with Enrique. Without paying much attention, he caught the monotonous cadence of their voices, until a sentence distinguished itself, remarkable enough, coming from the vender of tomales. Enrique had asked her a question, and this was her answer:

"The Father says that I am still in sin; he cannot give me absolution. I think it is merely an excuse to put off my marriage with Antonia. I am not worse than others that he should distinguish against me."

"You are wrong to say that of the Father, Pacheco. He knows that confession such as yours comes but from the lips, not from the heart. You would confess to the devil himself if that were the only road to marriage with Antonia."

"I was a fool to venture back so soon; I should have waited till matters were quiet. But I died, Enrique, thinking of them together in that cursed pit!"

"It was a meeting of your own contriving."

"I tell you it was not. Did I invite him to the cave? Once there, what could I do with him? Set him free, and he would prattle of what he had seen, and they would hunt me like a badger. Keep him with me? There was not food enough for two. There was scant for one, till Antonia should arrive, at the time appointed. The pity was that I had bowels and left him the key to the well, or that I did not crack his skull a little harder when I threw him in the cave."

"A pity to spoil a better case than your own. He has the face of the blessed St. Michael."

The tomale woman shook in her bundled rags like a sheaf of withered corn. Her words were a choking growl.

"Bah! the boy is not a madman like you. He is not bitten to the soul." Enrique spoke. "Antonia may never have looked at him but in compassion, as the angels might, seeing the state she found him in. The keys of your cave were a candle to the blind. Had she been a day later he had not been worth loading a donkey with."

"You have fatted him till now he could carry the donkey himself."

"All that I ever said was" — Enrique

spoke again — "he has looked at her. Very good; so has many another long-legged coxcomb about the town."

"And I am forbidden the house till her father's return."

"Yes, but you are her *novio*, wolf in sheep's clothing."

"If I am a wolf, what is he?"

"A very white little lamb beside you. If he sees her, it is in the American fashion, which means anything or nothing." Enrique's shoulders went up; his hands said the rest. "Extraordinary people! He has gone with three of them to-night, his little countrywomen; not a gray hair nor a wedding ring in the company. You might hear their parrot voices screaming the length of the street. With him it is not Antonia; it is any girl."

"I am in hell with thinking on them."

"You will get there fast enough without so much thinking."

Philip reported this conversation to Dunsmuir. It was agreed, now, that Alan must be sent away; but where?

The family wound still rankled. The family itself, on the other side, had greatly

changed in fifteen years. The present members had their own burdens, sufficient to their incomes; correspondence had nearly ceased.

"Chuck him into a big school, and let him strike out for himself and learn his insignificance," said Philip.

"Send him to heaven, if you happen to know the way!" was Dunsmuir's answer. The American schools were all alike, in his estimation; skin deep in scholarship, vulgar in tone, inordinately expensive.

Then Philip somewhat diffidently proposed the Continent as a compromise, with his mother's assistance in placing Alan at Zurich or Vevay. She would dote on another boy to "run" in vacations; and Alan would find it not so disagreeable to be preached to by an adorable woman, old enough to be his mother, who, as she was not his mother, would know when to "let up."

To his surprise, Dunsmuir fell in with the proposition at once. Philip cabled his mother, and wrote, sending Alan's picture; the lad's good looks, he well knew, would be a great point in his favor. Meantime Philip talked to him like an elder brother. He

could have wished to see him more touched in the temper, and less placidly flattered, by the attention his pastimes excited. Dunsmuir raved over the cost; a cool thousand it meant at the first go off, and he had promised his next surplus to Job, who needed the money at once on his land. No matter; the old people must wait. Dunsmuir felt the want of money all the more, now that he had begun to straighten his affairs and to handle a salary again. He was impatient to be free.

Pacheco had been arrested. Vargas had returned, with his mules, from Sheep Mountain, and was looking after his daughter. Alan was on parole. Dolly was cold, and would not talk of her brother. Her shame for him went hard with her; it was like a bilious sickness. She was for abjuring sentiment henceforth in any and every form. Away with it all! The lights were out in her own secret place of worship; cold daylight showed the images — mere tawdry dolls; her flowers of passion were turned to rags and shreds of tinsel. Not one kind word could Philip get from her in her revolt; not a single acknowledgment of all that had so nearly come to pass between them.

XVI.

DUNSMUIR'S PRICE.

THE river was now at its lowest. Coffer-dams were in place, which were to cramp it and turn it aside, and at night, when the pile-drivers, and the steam-hoists, and the dump-carts were silent, the harassed stream made loud its complaint. Dunsmuir had been ordered to "go ahead" and put in his dam on a pile foundation, where the rock gave out, that water might be turned into the ditch by May 1, in time to reap the next season's crop of contracts. He had protested in vain against the issuing of contracts which called for this early delivery of water. He had submitted his own plan of the dam — excavation, till solid rock should be reached, that the masonry might rise in one coherent mass from a permanent and homogeneous foundation. But such construction demanded more time than the contracts were giving him.

"What 's the matter with piles and con-

crete?" Norrisson had asked; and he mentioned several dams with pile foundations that were doing their duty. While in Denver, soon afterward, he took the occasion of meeting a friend, an engineer of reputation, to put the case of the Wallula dam, and asked his opinion. The engineer gave it, unofficially, on the facts as Norrisson presented them; he said that a pile foundation would serve. Norrisson quoted him triumphantly to Dunsmuir, who was unshaken, though considerably irritated by Norrisson's methods of warfare. If he had wanted a consulting engineer why had he not retained one, and got his report after a personal examination? The argument ceased, in words. A few days thereafter Dunsmuir received an official communication to the following effect: —

DEAR SIR: It will be necessary to proceed immediately with the construction of the dam, in accordance with the plan suggested by me and discussed in our last conversation. You may consider this authoritative. Very truly yours,

PRICE NORRISSON,
Manager.

ROBERT DUNSMUIR,
Chief Engineer.

Such a command, from the manager to the chief engineer, precisely indicated the relation between them, as Norrisson intended it should. The chief's resignation was in order, else he would remain as the servant of the company, not the responsible agent of the work. In his first outburst of indignation Dunsmuir wrote the answer which the situation demanded. It was some consolation to watch Philip's face, while he read it aloud to him with satisfied emphasis.

"Understand, I don't make it personal." Dunsmuir looked kindly, almost fondly, at Philip, who had not a word to say. "It is the old issue, the same that parted us the first time. It has parted better friends than your father and I ever pretended to be; and I don't say the alternative is of his contriving. I was my own promoter some weary years; I should know something of the difficulties on that side. But my choice is plain. I must stick to the first principle in our profession, Philip: the honest builder can wait, he can fail, he can starve; he cannot botch his work. I speak for myself, who am the only one accountable."

"I shall leave the work when you do."

"I don't see that you need; and I should be as jealous for you as for my son."

"I shall go with you, sir, for the sake of adding my protest, and because of what you have just said."

"There are moments of defeat worth more than many a victory," said Dunsmuir.

But in the silence of night, when consequences obtrude, he revised his decision. No man may be captive, even to his own will, for as long as Dunsmuir, without suffering the prison change. If Norrisson's company owned the scheme, the scheme owned Dunsmuir; and he knew it, now. He thought of his debts; of his children, restless and half educated; of his forsaken connections in the world that no longer knew him. A morbid dread of change had grown upon him; his fixed life had singularly, appealingly unfitted him for a fresh start. He had lost the habit of society; he was out of touch with the new movements in his profession; he had no elasticity, no imagination, no conviction left for any new work, so long as he was chained to this. He knew his bondage at last, and his soul cried out against it; yet he could not go forth, a penniless, broken man, with the scars of failure upon him. He had worn out his powers of waiting. A specious victory had granted him

the respite of three months of action, in command of forces he called his own ; he could not bear, now, to feel the screws take hold again in the same old shrinking places.

Then followed those lower considerations that lie in wait for moments of irresolution to worry the doubting heart. The truth concerning his resignation would never be known. Gossip would have it, in circles where an engineer's reputation is discussed, that here was a presumptuous dreamer who fancied himself called to a great work, who, after more than a decade spent in contemplating it, was found unequal to the initial problem of its fulfillment. How he hated that word theorist! there was nothing he so loved as to be considered practical. Now, the practical man would be his successor. He would reap the honors should the dam stand ; if it went out, how easily the blame might be shifted back upon the theorist. Dunsmuir was well acquainted with the dark side of his profession — the long waitings, the jealousies, the wrested honors, and the bitter rewards. He knew how a man's one mistake may follow him to his grave, while his successes are forgotten or credited to another.

At daybreak, when the wind fell, and with it a silence upon the sleeping house, he stole out from his bedroom to the office, and abstracted his letter of resignation from the post-bag. His decision was already reversed, yet he hesitated before the act that should cancel all that brave talk of the night before.

Yet why assume that it was a betrayal of the work? What are the risks that success will not justify? It was well enough known in the history of engineering that there is an heroic margin, outside the beaten track of precedent, which bold spirits yet may tread. He was half angry with Philip, now, as he thought of their conversation, that the younger man should have seen no way out of the difficulty but his chief's resignation. Decidedly Philip was too conservative. Of what use to be twenty-three and an American! The letter was torn into bits and went into the waste-basket, and Dunsmuir sat out the dawn, and heard the house awake, scarcely moving, face to face with the first deep, secret humiliation of his life. By breakfast time he had got his most presentable arguments in order. He sat working them, in silence, during the meal, and when

it was over he summoned Philip into the office, and said to him coldly: —

"I have called a halt, Norrisson. It is too late now to back out of the work; it would be desertion. I do not give orders here, it seems, but that is the fortune of war. They have captured my scheme by the strong arm. They can make what hash of it they please; but for better or worse I stay with it, and pride may go to the dogs. My pride shall consist in making the dam as strong as their infernal meddling will let me. If it goes, at least I shall know all was done that could be done, with such a management in the saddle. I know no fathers nor fathers' sons in this business. It 's a fight, and they have won. Let them make the most of it."

There was little Philip could say, not seeming to remind Dunsmuir of his recantation. Dunsmuir understood him. They spent a bad day, each inside his defenses. The pause in the work left them conscious of each other's presence as a burden, in the room where they had labored and argued together harmoniously. Philip brought on the explosion by a restless allusion to Dolly. He was always trying the ice of Dunsmuir's doubtful sanction, boy-fashion, to know when

it would bear. To-day he ventured too far; it cracked without warning; it thundered from shore to shore.

Philip had hazarded a nervous expression of the hope that, whatever grinds or hitches should come to the work, the peace of the relation might stand; and since men do not usually mean each other when they talk in this strain, Dunsmuir became fidgety and Philip more nervous.

He had never had a home life before, he awkwardly expatiated, unsupported by a sign of encouragement from Dunsmuir, — even for as long as he had lived in the cañon; never known a girl, in her home, as he had been privileged to know —

He paused, and Dunsmuir growled: "I don't know where you got the privilege. The home is one thing, the office is another."

Philip, seated on the table-ledge, thrust his hands into his pockets to hide that they were trembling. "The distinction comes a trifle late," he said.

"I will thank you to take note of it now. We have worked together well enough; my daughter is another matter."

"She is, to me."

"What is she to you?"

"She is the girl I hope, with your leave, to marry."

"And how long have you had this hope?"

"I hardly know," said Philip, white with stress of feeling. "I have been trying, for some time, to speak to you."

"I don't know what has prevented you. Are you sure you have not spoken to her?" Dunsmuir laid his keen blue eyes on Philip's conscious face.

"Ye have spoken! Deny it if you can." His big voice rang, like a sheet of boiler iron under the hammer.

"Why should I wish to deny it? It is the American way, to speak to her first; her answer is the only one any man would take."

"I know nothing of your American ways. But if you have spoken to my motherless child before that you spoke to me, ye have done me a treachery worthy your father's son; and you may quit my house!"

Philip jumped to his feet, and the table recoiled with a loud jar; for a moment there was no other sound in the room. Then he said, striving for self-control: "I don't know whether you consider yourself in a position to insult my father; but I am in no position to answer you as your words deserve. As

my father's son, or as anybody's son, my record is before you. By heaven! I don't know why fathers should be so arrogant. A father is not a god. If you are the one appointed to look after Dolly, it 's not my fault if you have neglected your business. No, sir; I will finish now. I found her here, where you had fixed her, at the mercy of your scheme. I was first, and I took no advantage that was not simply a man's. If I don't deserve her, do men generally deserve the girls they marry? None the less I mean to make her love me, if I can. I am not called traitor for nothing. I shall take all the chances, now, whatever comes."

Dunsmuir listened coolly to this explicit though somewhat mixed defiance, and smiled to himself, "The lad has spirit, after all." His eyebrows went up like clouds after a storm; a gleam of humor tugged at the corners of his grim mustache. He held, with most short-tempered men, that you cannot make a double-dealer forsake his guard; anger being like drink, that it exposes a man. When, therefore, he had seen this smooth-mannered son of the "commissioner" in a fine, loose-tongued rage, — with his jacket off, so to speak, — his own tall mood uncon-

sciously subsided. Presumably the charge of treachery had not come from very deep.

"We have taken a hot day for it," he remarked, with moderation, while Philip's mental reflection was that he would be happy to punch his much-desired father-in-law's head.

Dunsmuir filled his pipe, thrust his hands into the pockets of his loose riding breeches, and strode out upon the blazing porch, where the western sun, barred by shadows of the pillars, lay half across the floor. The seat of his wooden chair was as hot as a hearth-stone; he kicked it away, and took a canvas one, stretching his long length on it, with a loud, obtrusive yawn. He was in one of his man-childish moods, not so lovely and pleasant as he might have been. It might well be doubted if at Philip's age he had thought greatly of father's rights himself.

Philip went about his preparations for leaving, with the haste Dunsmuir's hint demanded. But he proposed to retreat, with his baggage, in good order, not to have his things hurled after him. He swept a place on the office table, which he heaped with small effects from drawers and pigeon-holes. Then he shot out across the hill, bareheaded,

to the tent where the junior assistants worked, returning with an armful of drawing tools and rolls of paper.

"I suppose I may take these — copies of my drawings for the head-works?" He indicated, without looking at his chief, a roll of photographic blue-prints.

"Take anything you want."

Half an hour later Dolly heard him, in the attic chamber, dragging trunks about furiously; he was making a lane for his own, which were stowed far back under the eaves; bitterly recalling, meanwhile, how he and Dolly had discussed their location three months before. They had been civil to each other in those days, and Dolly had insisted that he should take the high part, as he was tall, and he had refused because he went less often to his trunks than she to the family chests. No talk could have been smaller, but it was a thing to remember now, when all the little homely intimacies were at an end. Already the spent days and bygone evenings were beginning to glow and shine like memory pictures in the retrospect. Under the eaves, the temperature was near to that of the stoke-hole of a steamer. Dolly opened the door, letting in a breath of fresh-

ness, and a vision of herself, on a bright background, in a thin blue muslin frock.

"Leave it open, will you, please? I want the light," Philip panted.

"What are you looking for? It 's frightful in here; can't you wait till evening?"

"I shall not be here this evening."

"Going to town again?"

"I 'm going to leave."

Dolly appeared to be closely considering a veil of dust-laden cobweb that wavered from the nearest beam.

"To leave the cañon? Dear me! Jenny must sweep this place," she parenthesized coolly.

Philip gave her no answer. Down came a trunk, on top of another trunk, with an offensive slam.

"I did n't understand you. Are you going on some other part of the work?"

"I have left the work."

"I suppose it 's none of my business why?"

"It is; and I don't mind telling you. I 've been fired."

"Not from the work?"

"Not precisely; only from the house."

"I don't believe it. There must be some mistake. It 's the silliest thing I ever heard," cried Dolly, indignantly.

"Silly if you like, but quite true. Your father's language is plain."

Here Philip grappled with a trunk, hurling his weight upon the handle; the bulk gave way, more quickly than he had expected, he lurched forward, rose too suddenly, and his bump of self-esteem smote the rafter overhead with a blinding crash. He dropped sidewise on the trunk, and clutched his head, setting his teeth upon the brutal pang. As if that were not enough, Dolly, sickening at the sound of the blow, began to "poor" him and pity him with all her might.

"Oh, how it hurts!" she moaned, as if the head had been her own. She dropped on her knees before him, and begged to see the place. He shuddered, feeling her cool hands take soft hold of his throbbing wrists, and the natural man in him demanded that he snatch her instantly and kiss away the anguish of his double hurt. Why not be the traitor he had been called? But the barbarian was not on deck this time; he subsided, with a groan, which Dolly thought was for the aching head.

When Philip looked up, frowning and blushing with pain, and his clouded eyes met hers brimming with purest mother-pity, he

blessed God that he had not wounded her innocent trust, or blotted the memory — all that was left him — of their perfect days together in the cañon.

He gave thanks again, that afternoon, when Dunsmuir made overtures of peace on magnanimous terms, including a withdrawal of all uncertain charges.

About four o'clock the up-cañon wind, forerunner of a dust-storm, began to blow. The women ran about, shutting doors and windows, and Dunsmuir was driven in from the porch. Dead leaves, chips, bits of paper, whatever was detachable, drove past the house, whirled in the murky onset of the storm.

Dunsmuir heard the hammock slapping the piazza-posts ; the willow rockers slammed to and fro ; one went over with a crash, and the front door banged wide, filling the room with dust. Every day for six weeks Dunsmuir had meant to fix that latch ; he cursed it now, and went outside to pick up chairs and pile them to leeward, locking the door after him, on his return, in the teeth of the storm. Half his letters and papers were on the floor, and where he stepped to pick them up he left prints of his feet in the dust.

Philip came downstairs, pale from his hurt, with bloodshot eyes. He was dressed for the road, and carried a canvas covert-coat on his arm. A transit book he had forgotten showed in the inside pocket; he drew it out and tossed it on the desk.

"I 'll send you those vouchers to-morrow," he said to Dunsmuir. Then he asked which of the men should drive him to town.

"Sit down." Dunsmuir looked at him hard. "You can't start till this is over." He went out and gave an order in the kitchen, which was followed soon by Jenny with beer and biscuits.

Philip would take neither, and Dunsmuir finished the beer himself, feeding the biscuits to Jenny's boy, who had tagged his mother into the room, and declined to be peacefully evicted. Every few mouthfuls the child paused in his copious eating, and pointed to the chimney, saying: "Hark! Win'!"

"Right you are, mannie. Wind that would take the hair off your head if you were out in it. Now the little beggar 's choking! Save us! where 's that woman?" Dunsmuir picked up the child by his garments, coughing and spluttering, and handed him out of the door like a puppy.

"Have a pipe?" he suggested affably, when peace was restored, with the sound of the wind asserting itself.

"Thanks, I don't care to smoke," said Philip.

"What 's your quarrel with the work, man? I never said you could not do your work."

"I never said you did. If you had, it would not have been true," Philip answered roughly.

"Then why do you quit it?"

"Should you care to work under a man that had called you a traitor and the son of a traitor?"

"Tush! you would have it. You brought it on yourself. Ye knew I was hit between wind and water, and the less said about that the better. But you need not have come purring after my daughter."

"The time was ill chosen, I acknowledge; but the fact remains," said Philip.

"Let it remain, then. There 's no occasion to meddle with it. You did not come here to make love to my daughter."

"I had not done so — not more than I could help — when you opened on me. But you have relieved me of my scruples. I intend to give my mind to it now."

"You said that before. Now suppose we talk sense. It 's ill changing horses when you 're crossing a stream. I don't deny that I 'd rather have you than another on this job, now we 've started in. There 's little time to waste, and I might be a month wiring back and forth for a man to fill your place. Stay where you are, and behave yourself cannily, and when the right time shall come, may be we can talk of it and keep our hair on. I would see, first, if you are a man of your word as well as your work. What 's six months to serve for a lassie! When the work is done, when the dam is in, why, then, if I am content with the way you have borne yourself, we 'll speak of this again. This is no time for marrying or giving in marriage."

"I am willing enough to wait," said Philip, "if the terms of waiting are not made impossible."

Dunsmuir smiled. "You may look at her in reason, so far as is needful to keep out of her way. No, no, lad; ye shall be friends. Make each other's acquaintance, but keep to the windward of promises and — and such toys. I have some notion of a man myself. I 'm not taking you on trust altogether — and I 'm not so ruthless, nor so careless of

my household, as you 've had the insolence to insinuate. Now, shall we take a fresh grip of the work? It would be a waste of good man-material for you and me to quarrel."

They looked each other in the eyes, hard and long. Then Philip went to the mantel-shelf and filled him a pipe, and they smoked together in silence, while the wind fell, and scattering gleams from the low sun showed lines and surfaces of dust like fine ashes that toned the colors of the room.

"But am I not to have leave to explain?" asked Philip, frowning over the match with which he was lighting his second pipe. "Not a word, before the shutting down? Consider, I have told her" —

"You have told her enough, I have little doubt. I 'll do the explaining myself."

"But she will think" —

"Let her think, and let her fash herself with thinking. Philip, I mean this in fair kindness to you both. If the lassie cannot bear with a touch of doubt beforehand, do you think you 'll be able to satisfy her hereafter? Let her think, and let her misdoubt and upbraid you in her thoughts. It 's what you well deserve, if I know what young men are. A little thinking beforehand will do you both no harm."

XVII.

A DISINGENUOUS DEFENSE.

THE false position on the work began to make itself felt. Dunsmuir settled into a cynical tone, which he held from this forth: that the new plan was well enough; that the dam would stand; that he had been over-conservative, but was not hidebound or wedded to a method. He rather implied that Philip was. There was a ghastly amity between the chief and the manager, which Philip blushed to behold.

The work went on, but the light of a fine enthusiasm was gone. The changed atmosphere pervaded the house. Dolly guessed that her father and Philip disagreed about the work, and that Philip had been sullen in yielding.

She had her own hesitations concerning Philip. Alone with her judgment of eighteen, she put this and that together and asked herself what such things meant, and Philip read the doubt in her transparent

face. He yearned to make himself understood. He knew and half despised his graceless advantage, first as he was and strong in the indispensable offer of that comradeship for which her bright nature was starving. He knew that she was the child of solitude, which makes sensitive and weakens the nerve, and darkens the chamber of the imagination, through which pictures are printed on the soul.

Yet he was not brave or generous enough to wait and trust to win her in an open field. Who was he that he should measure himself with the world — ringing with men, with the confusing shibboleth of art and culture, with the pride of modern life, as Dolly could barely conceive it, and with those most subtle temptations which beset a girl of spirit through her longing to excel? Therefore Philip made the most of such chances as his contract left him free of, and few men could venture to blame him; and if Dolly did not understand, it was her bashfulness and inexperience that defeated his efforts to make her.

Dolly was hearing gossip in these days. It touched the fabric of her dreams, and made the appearances, which were supposed

to be the facts of her life, more puzzling than ever.

"You like Mr. Norrisson better than you did; not so?"

It was Friday morning, and Dolly was dusting in the office, under her father's jealous supervision, lest she carry her ministrations too far.

"'Not so'?" he mimicked; and Dolly, remembering that the phrase was one of Philip's, turned a vexed red.

"Well, well, keep your blushes! All our speech is but imitation. What was the question?"

"It does n't matter."

"It matters that you pout like that at a word. Come, repeat me the question!" He caught her hand as she passed his chair and drew her down into his lap. She cast her arms about his neck, and burst into tears. Dunsmuir expostulated in awkward man-fashion, and cried, "Come, come!" and tried to raise her head and to make her speak. She dived into her skirt for a handkerchief, and, finding the pocket empty, begged in an abject whisper for her father's. He gave her his ample silk one, and she settled her face into its folds for a good cry.

Already she felt better; but Dunsmuir was thinking severely.

"Are you keeping something from me, Dolly?"

"No; I have nothing to keep," said Dolly, forlornly. "I wish — Margaret" — She could not bear the piteousness in her own voice, and a fresh burst followed the effort to speak.

"Yes, yes; I quite understand," said Dunsmuir, soothingly. "We are all out of kilter since Margaret went. She has spoiled us, every one. But I have been proud to see how you buckle to the housekeeping. Why, Margaret herself would never believe it. But may be you 're not mindful enough of your own strength?"

Dolly shook her head, and nestled closer in response to these paternal blandishments.

"Forgive my sulking," she apologized. "All I asked was, Do you not like Mr. Norrisson better since you 've known him better?"

"I have always liked Philip Norrisson, in a way."

"I mean the father. Is he the same man, or is he changed — or are we changed?"

Dunsmuir put the girl gently off his knee,

and wheeled about in his screw-chair facing his desk. "Come, come!" he said. "Get these shelves in order before you forget where the boxes belong."

"Can you not spare me a few minutes? We scarcely ever talk by ourselves any more. I hear a word here and a word there, and every word is a fling at the name of Norrisson." She stood up and braved the blush that mounted to her face as she spoke. "Once it was Margaret, now it is Jenny, and even Adeline must have her say, and they are people only lately in the country. What is it that 's so well known, and why do *we* have to condone it?"

"If you are not above picking up tales in the kitchen," Dunsmuir interrupted.

"Do you call Margaret 'the kitchen'?"

"Margaret cannot speak a word without prejudice, nor ever could since I have known her."

"Has it been prejudice with you, then, father? Since I can remember, — until very lately, — you have made no secret of your disdain of Mr. Price Norrisson and all his works. It is a prejudice your women were brought up in. Has there been some mistake?"

"The mistake is that you should perplex yourself with the matter at all. You cannot know the whole; and without the whole you cannot understand a part. It is a history impossible for one side to tell with fairness to the other."

"There are still two sides, then? I had supposed from present appearances that you were both on the one side."

"Come, get alang wi' ye! Ye deave me wi' your clatter," Dunsmuir evaded. But his playfulness sat grievously on him, and it jarred upon his child.

"You may joke and put me off, but it 's a thing that cries for explanation."

"I am not a man who explains. Go ask Philip Norrisson to expound his father to you. I should be blithe of the young man's interpretation."

"I ask you simply, What has he done? What have you — or had you — actually against him? And why do poor people speak of him in the same breath with their injuries, as if he were a public swindler?"

"Is that how the talk goes? Why, bless me, I supposed he was the man on horseback, the biggest frog in the puddle. So the people have memories, after all? It

must be the soreheads, then; the ones who got left. The peculiar disgrace in this country is to 'get left,' you 'll observe; to grumble is next to it; the two go together, like cowardice and lying."

"Are we soreheads, then? Is that why we have grumbled?"

"You have a shrewd Scots tongue, young woman," said Dunsmuir, with a bitter chuckle. "It is well seen we have had catechists in the family."

"This may amuse you," Dolly answered, and her lip trembled. "It reminds me that once you would not have put me off so, when I had far less reason for asking to be satisfied."

Dunsmuir considered her flushed, excited face, and answered soberly: "Dolly, the trouble between Price Norrisson and your father was never a personal quarrel, understand; it was a difference in our methods of working. He is a promoter, one who peddles schemes in the money markets; he neither builds out of his head nor pays out of his pocket; he is the man who talks. And I am the man who builds, wisely or fondly, as the case may be. It is well known we engineers have a great conceit of our

own ideas. But my plan was no more to Norrisson than any other man's; its merit to him was its price. He was jealous of the time spent pothering with a slow project, while he might have been reaping commissions from several. So he patched up a scheme of his own, which he privately substituted. To do him justice, he offered me half; but I could not look at it, from the nature of it, which was rotten, and he was tired of what he called my overniceness; and that was the break between us. I dare say I may have been invidious; I was angry. And he might have been more open with me. He might have waited to be off with one deal before he was on with another. He might afterward have been either for me or against me, and not have kept a vengeful interest in my scheme, which he used to strangle it with, whenever it showed signs of life. Still, that is 'business,' according to the business man's code. If I could have had a partner, as sagacious and plucky as Norrisson, with a better sense of faith and a larger grasp of the scheme, we had not waited so long, perhaps. Yet it has not been long. Land-builders must be content to work as nature works. But he had never a concep-

tion of the thing in hand; he does not love the making of a country: he wants the price of his dicker, and so away to the next one. The present combination, if you insist on knowing, was forced upon me. It 's a union like that between the Scots and the English — neither was happy in it, nor very proud of it; yet both lived, as we shall, to reap its benefits and to forget its humiliations."

"It is an ill-omened comparison. Our ditch-union, I hope, is not a sale," said Dolly, deeply moved. "And does the sun shine, now, on you both? Do you remember how you said you would never forgive him till he stood out of your sunlight?"

"A poor, silly speech. You would credit me more by forgetting it. Men make such speeches to their women, who are indulgent to a phrase. The sun is for him that can make hay while it shines. That is what Norrisson did, in fine, when he built his ditch."

"Are you the apologist now, father, or the historian?"

"Are you ever going to get over that ill-bred habit of retort? It is intolerable in a woman. You and Alan have argle-bargled till you know no other way of speaking. I

have answered your first question. Now what else have you heard, between kitchen and parlor? What are the people's injuries?"

"I should like to know the whole story of Norrisson's ditch."

"Would you, indeed? and do you think your father is the man to tell it? Would you take for gospel Norrisson's story of my ditch?"

"I will make allowance; but I would have it from you. I ask you not to spare whatever to you is the truth."

"Poor Norrisson! If he only knew that the girls are after his record. I don't quite perceive the grounds of my daughter's interest."

"I should think you might. He has stood for the enemy of my house these years and years; now he stands for the friend. I am all turned about, and I 'm tired of being put off with 'phrases.'"

Dunsmuir laughed at her sharpness, but still with that bitter levity which took away her confidence in his answers. Dolly saw he was talking speciously, but could imagine no reason for his want of frankness.

"Well, then," he began, "Norrisson built

a ditch seventy miles long in something less than a hundred days. He boomed up the lands, and the settlers rushed in; and, as most of them were short of cash, Norrisson's company forms another company — two names but one pocket. The loan and mortgage company advanced money to the settlers on their lands, and the water company sold them water. But the ditch was got together in such a hurry-scurry that it took a year or two to settle down to regular work; the water was here and there and everywhere but where it was wanted. The first crops went under, and the first crop of settlers went along with them. There was a terrible tumble in real estate; claims were jumped; there were foreclosures, contests, and scandals, and the deuce to pay generally. And when the pie was smashed, Norrisson and his crowd gathered and picked out the plums. After that it was well seen they could afford to patch up the leaks in their ditches. There was never a wilder water-system on the face of this earth, yet somehow they have scrambled through. I understand the farmers are making money now. I supposed the past was forgotten, except they used it as an election cry.

What I have chiefly against Norrisson is not personal to the man. We are fearfully and wonderfully made; all honesty is comparative, and the best of us cannot boast. It is the man's methods of business I object to. He has antagonized the farmers at the outset; he cinched them, there 's not a doubt; and we are now to reap the fruits of the stone-age policy. It means a fight, and a great waste of the energies and the money of a new community. And when our big ditch is lined with ranches, and the farmers poll more votes than the company, they 'll have to be bought, or they 'll swing the elections and use their power as he has used his. It is all very corrupting, and a weariness to think on, when there 's a policy so much broader, which has been proved by the sad, wasteful experience of centuries. But it is written that young nations and young lives shall never profit by the mistakes of the old; every life and every country must learn its own lessons. But for an Old World looker-on, who has seen it all thrashed out before, it is a dowie business."

"Then you think Mr. Norrisson means to be honest, by his way of thinking?"

"I think he means to be a rich man."

"Have you ever seen the beautiful Mrs. Norrisson?"

"No; she has never shown up in this part of the country. I hear she is disaffected toward her husband and her native land, but she accepts her living from both; a lady with a small fist that can hold a heap of money. And there, you see, is where it befits to be charitable to the husband who has that hand to fill. Small blame to him if"—

"Oh, I 've heard enough!" the girl broke in with a passionate gesture. "And where do you suppose the son comes from? His honesty is comparative too, I suppose?"

"He is a canny chiel," Dunsmuir answered coldly.

He watched Philip jealously in these days of his probation; took note of his prudent silence, on a situation both had agreed was impossible — to any but a venal chief, attainable through the loaves and fishes. Assuredly the young man had powers of self-control. Dunsmuir watched him come and go, faithful to the work, yet uncommitted; eyed him as Saul eyed David, and loved him not, yet could find in him no cause of offense.

XVIII.

A BROKEN TOOL.

"GUDE be thankit!" cried Margaret, opening the door to Dunsmuir. "Come awa' in out o' the stour."

Again the dust-wind was raging up the valley, that last day of a pitiless September, long remembered, even in a patient land, for its brazen days, and stifling nights, and ceaseless storming winds that brought no rain, but "stour."

Squaw Butte and the War Eagle had not been seen for weeks, so close fell the curtain of smoke from burning forests. Hundreds of acres, to the north and east, were on fire, turning the sun's light to a ground-glass glare, and troubling the heated atmosphere. The evening before, a false wind blew up from the plains; the clouds sulked all night, and promised rain; next day a lurid sun peered forth and vanished. The desert wind arose, and the dust-cloud marched before it, and, as it drew near, fields and fences were

blotted out of the landscape, houses loomed like stranded hulks, and trees like staggering masts, and which was earth and which sky no eye could distinguish in the yellow darkness.

Dunsmuir had had what Margaret would have called a warning, that his errand to the homestead must not wait. He traveled ahead of the storm, which broke upon the ranch at about three of the afternoon. He could scarcely see the house, from the stacks where he tied his horse. There was neither barn nor stable, no shelter for the few poor cattle, no roof to the well, no porch to the bare, little two-roomed cabin. Yet it was a home, and a great sorrow had come to it. Dunsmuir had no need to ask its nature. That helpless man-shape sunk in a chair, propped back, with a comforter tucked around it, was Job. His feet were in a tub of hot water, which steamed up into his white, drawn face, and eyes of speechless appeal, turned from one to the other of the two who looked at him as if he were already not of this world.

"When did this happen, poor woman?" said Dunsmuir, giving his sympathy, as we do, to the mourner before the sufferer.

"'Deed, I think it 's an hour sin' he was taken; but I cannae rightly say, I have been

sae crazed wi' the storm an' the heat an' the sair wark o' handlin' him — ma puir mannie!"

The heat was something fearful. The house had been shut tight against the laden gusts, which shook the feeble door, and beat upon the windows, and cast the dust of the valley road upon the roof, like ashes on the head of a mourner. Margaret had crammed the stove with dry sage-stumps in her haste to prepare the footbath; she had put mustard into the water, and the odor of it was sickening in the close-shut, reeking room. Her face was purple, shining with tears and perspiration, and twisted with grief. She knelt and lifted the pulseless feet into her lap, and dried them, and cried a little as she showed the towel — one of the fine ones "the child" had given her, with her mother's own maiden name wrought upon it. Dunsmuir helped her get the helpless bulk into a bed, in the other room, which Margaret had hastily spread with clean sheets; and again she could not pass over without calling attention to the comforts Dolly's mindfulness had supplied, so grateful now to her fond, simple heart. It pleased her that Job should lie upon the finest and softest of linen and

feathers, provided by her whom they loved as their own child.

"He 'll come out of it, Margaret," said Dunsmuir. "I think he knows me." And he went up close to Job, and spoke to him as to a child, asking him the question. They knew not how much of Job was there to hear, even without the power to answer. It were better he should remain without the doors of consciousness, than reënter, to behold the ruin that he was. Job made a feeble motion of his left hand toward the right, which lay as it had fallen when they placed him on his back in the bed. Dunsmuir lifted that awful dead member and laid it across his chest. A look of greater ease crept into the strange, familiar face on the pillow. "You know me, Job?" Dunsmuir persisted, in the forlorn attempt to comfort Margaret. "He knows me, see!" Job had fixed his eyes upon Dunsmuir's face with a stare that had something like intelligence in it. His mouth worked, but he could not articulate. Still, it was plain that the stroke was not to be the final one. In the outer room, while the drear wind tormented the valley and blotted it from their sight, Dunsmuir made known his business.

"Here," said he, "is the last of the money that 's so long overdue; and it comes none too soon, my poor woman. I suppose you would not have asked me for a penny, however ye were?"

"Indeed, an' I would," answered Margaret. "That 's no the way o' my pride. But ye need na cum'er yoursel' wi' us. We have made out vera weel, as ye can see. We have wantit for naething in reason. And I 'm just thankfu' that we cam awa' here to oursel', as he was aye fleechin' an' beggin' me to do. He 'd a hankerin' to set the place in order, or ere he left me to fend for mysel'. I 'm thinkin' he 'll have had his warnin'."

"You put shame upon us all, Margaret, when you talk of fending for yourself. Who was it stood by me, in the mother's place to my children, with all the mother's cares, and none of her honors or blood rights? I shall never try to tell you how it fared with me to see you go out of my house without even your money wages in your pocket. You 'll give us the right now to show you 're something more to us than a chance comer and goer. Come, I must have your promise that you 'll let me know, from this forth, whatever you 're in want of. So far as I 'm able, I 'll see that you get it."

By four o'clock the wind had moderated so that Dunsmuir was able to set out home again and to send a messenger for the doctor. He had proposed to come back himself and spend the night; but Margaret seemed so distressed at his taking such unwonted trouble, that he wisely substituted the offer of Dolly's company, with a trusty man to stay by the ranch. It was easy to surprise Margaret's wishes now; she was off all her guards at once, and softened to the simple truthfulness of grief. She accepted what she wanted, and was fearless in refusing.

A fair, rosy evening followed the storm. There had been rain higher up, on the mountains, and the freshness had descended without the moisture; gusts of coolness scattered the dry roses and rustled the withering vines. Philip very definitely proposed to be the man who should accompany Dolly, and watch with her at the ranch. And Dunsmuir, who depended on him, though he might not own it, was thankful for his offer. Philip hurried to change his dress after dinner. He heard Dolly at the trunks in the attic, and went to the door, as once she had come, to see what was doing in there. She was searching for an old dressing-gown of her father's, also for

certain pairs of fine woolen socks which Margaret had knitted for him one Christmas, when he had complained of cold feet, and he had unwittingly hurt her feelings by never wearing. She thought with awe of Job's condition, that he should need to be warmed in such weather. She was as red as a poppy with the heat and perhaps from other causes. She was in her dressing-sack; but to Philip's untutored eye there was no suggestion of dishabille in the pretty white jacket sprigged with roses, which showed a pair of arms he loved to look at, whether bare or sleeved. He longed to do all manner of wild homages to Dolly — to her arms and hands and feet and little fair head of tumbled hair. She was in a great fuss and hurry, trying one trunk after another; she grew troubled in her search, partly at Philip's help, which confused her and made it impossible to think or to remember.

In the third trunk they tried, the upper tray was filled with a large, soft, fragrant bundle that rustled richly and smelled of lavender and attar of roses.

"What can this be, laid away so preciously?" Philip smiled, with man-like curiosity, quickened by his flattered senses.

"This must be the offering of the wise-hearted, in 'blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen.' Might one take a peep? This is surely the odor of sanctity."

Dolly shrinkingly owned that it might be — it was her mother's wedding-dress; and Philip abased himself in silence. She permitted him to lift out the long tray, and, as he did so, one end caught, and came up with a jerk that sent a small parcel to the floor.

"Oh!" said she, "I must show you these — Alan's and my christening things. You 'd never believe what pretty clothes I once wore, before I was a beggar maid. But perhaps this is too childish?"

"I scarcely know you any more," — Philip pretended offense, — "you have so many doubts and primmy notions. Once you were not afraid to be childish."

They bent together over the small, soft bundle, as Dolly unpinned it on her lap, and displayed the ridiculous proportions of the tiny garments, doting with a seamstress's enthusiasm on their exquisite finish. She explained the mysteries of lace tuckers that folded down, and sleeves that looped up, and held one frock beneath her chin to show its sumptuous length from bib to hem of love-

liest needlework, and every stitch set by hand. A subtle rich perfume, long laid away in the yellowing folds, stole forth upon the garret's tropic warmth. It spoke to them of memories merged in dreams, of a future tremulously foreshadowed. Philip, half intoxicated by the intimacy of these researches, was the only conscious one; Dolly was simply girlishly flattered by his impassioned interest in her sartorial past. These pompous little robes had been the delight of her earliest visits to the attic; but the wedding-gown had ever been hedged about with careful ceremonies and precautions. No hands but Margaret's had ever ventured to unfold those lengths of shimmering satin and creamy drifts of lace, nor could Dolly realize that she was now sole keeper of the garments in which the sacred mother-past lay folded away. Something of this she tried to say; for Philip was one who seemed to understand everything.

"I have almost a guilty feeling, do you know, when I come here and rummage by myself. All the history of our poor house lies packed away in these trunks, ever since it stopped in the cañon, and nothing more happened. All my mother's happy girl-days

were put away here, with her evening gowns, and her pretty shoes, and fans, and ribbons; and here" — Dolly laid her hand softly on the wedding gown — "she was a bride; and here, a mother; and then it was all over, and Margaret locked her trunks and has kept the keys ever since. And we children never really knew her. We have no right here, do you think?"

She was sitting on the closed trunk-lid, the keys hanging from her warm hand, blanched with the heat and tremulous from exertion. Transported by that unconscious "we," Philip bent and kissed the hand — only the little finger of it that lay apart. It was his one transgression. Dolly turned her face away; the tears sprang to her eyes. Her look of dumb seeking for something beyond him, which he could not give her, put Philip far from her, and he was moved to say humbly: —

"Would you rather some one else went with you to the ranch?"

"Why should you think so? and who else is there to go?"

Philip smiled; it was hard to wait. He looked at her troubled face, all flushed and weary with a childish abandonment, and

thought of all the Rests, as many as the Joys of Mary, with which they could rest each other. She needed the rest of change; and quickly he was rapt away in his besetting dream, of two young student lovers, — he with the better grasp, she with the subtler feeling, — nesting in the old cities of art and learning, always referring their work to the special requirements of the life awaiting them at home. He felt himself not content to be merely a builder of ditches; he looked forward to being an administrator of waters, in the new communities water should create, and here came in the human element which immensely enlarged the scope of his work and of her helpfulness.

That night at the ranch Dolly watched him fetch and carry, for Margaret, the wood and the water, and gravely consult with her about the chores. She heard him speaking words which seemed inspired of the most delicate discernment. She saw him with Job's head against his shoulder (in the name of all pity, what a contrast!) while Margaret fed medicines into the relaxed mouth that could neither protest nor thank her any more. She jealously watched for a sign of repugnance, or condescension, or relief when

the ordeal was over, and saw him always simple, sensitive, and brotherly, through all the discomfort, and sorrow, and squalor of the night. She saw, above all, that Margaret accepted him with the sure instinct of grief, taking his presence and his most intimate services as much a matter of course as her own. Dolly was comforted in her instinctive faith. Her proofs were sufficient to herself. He might have come of shabby ancestry, he might have cared and ceased to care; none the less he was a friend, a gentleman, a comrade she could give her hand to, in joy or sorrow, and her people were his people and her poor were his poor.

Philip went away next morning after breakfast, saying he would return or send some one in his place to spend the night. Breakfast had been early; at ten the doctor made his visit; the remainder of the day seemed endless. After the supper things had been set away Margaret lay down beside the sick man and fell asleep. Whether Job slept or not Dolly could not be sure; he lay quiet with closed eyes. She went out and walked about the dusty premises, the roosting fowls inquiring concerning her presence with querulous squalls and side-

long duckings. She walked from the door to the fence and back till she knew every weed by the path. At the gate she would stop and look up the cañon road; then she restricted her looking to every other time. Now and again she opened the cabin door and listened, and heard only the clock ticking and the kettle rising to a boil. She had wearied herself with walking, and was going in, when she saw Philip dismounting at the gate; he had come across through the sage-brush. He walked beside his horse up the dusty path, and she went out gladly to meet him.

With an odd, embarrassed smile, in silence he handed her a letter. It was addressed to her father, and it had been opened.

"Did you know it was from Alan?"

"Oh, yes," said Philip; "your father read me parts of it." Dolly thought his manner very peculiar.

"If the news is bad, I wish you would tell me first."

"There is news; but I don't know if you will call it bad."

"Does father?"

"Well, yes — rather. Will you not read

the letter? There is nothing shocking in it."

"There are pages and pages! 'New York, September 25.' Has n't he sailed yet?"

"Won't you read the letter, Dolly?"

"What is all this about Estelle? Who is Estelle, for pity's sake?" Dolly had gone to the root of the matter.

"Estelle Summercamp. Don't you remember — the people who were here last summer, whom Alan met on the train?"

"Oh, *that* girl! Has he been with them all this time in New York? and is that why he has not written?"

"It 's hardly fair to Alan not to read what he has to say for himself. I 'm sure you 'll find it interesting."

Philip walked away, leading his horse. Dolly, angry and alarmed and sick with a new, ridiculous foreboding, read on, page after page of excited boyish narrative: I came, I saw, I conquered! Dolly was cold to his jubilance, for now she knew what was coming.

"She swears she is five-and-twenty." [This sentence caught her eye, as she hurried along.] "I don't believe it; she does n't

look as old as I do, but she knows a precious lot more about everything except riding. We ride every day in the Park; it 's awfully dear, but they don't seem to think of the cost of anything, and she says she likes me on horseback. . . . Amongst them they 've got about twelve hundred acres of land. . . . I shall take up my land next theirs; Mr. Summercamp says they will have a railway station and a town directly on the lands. . . . It 's gone out that I 'm a younger son — British aristocrat — making money hand over fist in Texas cattle. *They* don't mind, but I think I see my father smile."

Dolly put down the letter with a flushed and burning face. She was too angry to cry. So Alan was to marry the girl with the laugh; they would go giggling through life together. And all this had been transacting while, in the cañon, days were counted till the coming of his letters, and her father walked the floor at night, as she had heard him, hoping and planning and wrestling for his son. She pushed the cabin door ajar, for she longed to talk it over with Margaret, who had the sure touch in trouble. All was still but Margaret's heavy breathing.

"Na, na," she muttered in her sleep, "he wad be shoggen a' to pieces. I could na bear to see it."

The lump rose in Dolly's throat. She felt, as never in her life before, how poor they were in numbers, how isolated from larger circles where life was a bustling business, and people made new friends and dispensed with old ones every day. How easily Alan had affiliated with all that seemed so hostile, so insolent, to herself! All the world to Dolly was made up of Summercamps, and their money and their plans and their pleasures. She had no heart to go on with Alan's rank rejoicings. In the stillness of that smitten place there was almost a ribald tone in his talk of dinners, and theatre parties, and roses at a dollar apiece, and new clothes, and new friends who had never heard of the cañon or the scheme. Philip came and sat beside her, unbuckling his spurs, and knocking off the dust on the doorstep.

"Why do you take it so seriously?"

"She is five-and-twenty, and he is not nineteen, and they met on the train, and were engaged two days after they reached New York. And he thinks her father and

mother are delighted. If they are, they are very strange people."

"Alan is a very sweet boy," said Philip.

"Oh, he is, he is! He might have been," sobbed Dolly, breaking down. "But now he 'll never be anything but a hanger-on of those people."

"They are the same age inside." Philip tried to comfort her. "I spent a day with her myself, remember. She is very jolly, and clever, and nice, as girls go, and you can't deny she is pretty. And they have a power of money."

"So you think because she is pretty and rich it must be all right!" cried Dolly, scornfully.

"I think it might be much worse. 'Better not be too proud.'"

Her lips trembled. "I know very well what you mean. You think, with poor Alan, the most we can ask is to be defended from the worst. But, except for Pacheco and all her squalid connections, I 'd sooner it had been Antonia."

"O Dolly, no! There are possibilities with a Miss Summercamp, but none with an Antonia. Besides, they are not married yet. Come, Dolly," he said, rising and offering

his hand; "come, you must brace up, you know. You will have to comfort your father. He hates it rather worse than you do."

They walked on toward the gate together, Dolly clasping and twisting the letter in her nervous hands.

"Is n't it pitiful, is n't it absurd! One can't have even the comfort of calling it a sorrow! Suppose they don't marry; or suppose they do, and get tired of each other in a year? There 's no knowing what he 'll do next. Margaret has always said the price would be required of us, if ever we should get our great wish. The work is going on; all has come to pass that we used to pray for — but there is Alan's cap on the wall, and my father does not look as if success agreed with him."

"Dolly, you are not going back on the scheme?"

"Ah, it costs too much. And it may not be for us, after all."

"That should not matter. And we are in it now for all we are worth. When a thing like this gets started it runs those who thought to run it. Don't go in yet; it is all quiet in there. You look as if you needed a walk. Take my arm?"

"No; people must walk wide apart in this dust."

"Take my hand, then."

"I need both hands for my skirts."

"Fiddledeedee your skirts! I never saw a small person so occupied with her clothes. You should wear buckskins, like a little squawsy, and then you could trot alongside and kick up all the dust you pleased."

"If I were a squaw I should trot behind."

"Not if you were my squaw."

Dolly's chin went up, and she walked wider apart than ever; but she was no longer quite so melancholy; and presently she began quoting, in a tone of high derision: —

"'We twa hae paidl't i' the burn
Frae mornin' sun till dine.'

"How Margaret used to love to sing those words to us, who never heard the sound of a burn in all our lives! And she from a country that sang and shouted with water!"

"What does it matter where we do our paddling? It 's whom we paddle with. I can fancy just as good paddling in this dust of the plains as in any burn that ever brawled; only I should paddle on horseback, with my squaw on a pony beside me.

Come out where we have n't these lines of fence posts in our faces. Hark ! How still it is, after the cañon ! "

Night was falling, the clear sky of the desert darkening slowly without a cloud. Dew on the pungent sage dampened the dust and gave strength to the air they breathed. A bell-mare hoppled somewhere in the brush, clanked flatly as she stepped. Coyotes raved in the far offing like a pack of demented dogs. Against the low, bright west loomed a cowboy shape, enlarging in a spurt of dust that unrolled and drifted to leeward. He veered, and passed them afar, and the beat of his horse's hoofs throbbed, fainter and fainter, long after the dust hid him.

" Dolly," said Philip, " don't forget what we are here for: this is the land we are going to reclaim. Can you not fancy it — miles and miles, at sunset, shining with ditches, catching the sky in gleams; and the low houses and the crops, and the dark lines of trees reflected in the water-channels? You will like it when you see it, and I should n't be surprised if you called it home. And if there are no burns, there will be gentle, sober ditches. Our waters shall do

their singing and shouting up in the mountains; they come down here on business. Your burns are nothing but mad children. Ditches are tender, good mothers, taking thought where they go, not ripping and tearing through the land. Oh, you will like it, and one day you will own it for your country. You are a 'bunch-grass belle,' Dolly, however you may boast of your heather."

XIX.

THE IRONY OF SUCCESS.

By the following spring Job had so far recovered from his stroke as to be able to sit in the rude wheeled-chair contrived for him, in front of the cabin in the sunshine, and to watch Margaret digging in the garden, or watering the calves, or hanging out her wash on the lines Job had put up for her in the days of his usefulness. A neighbor had taken the management of the farm "on shares," but, with the chores and the housework and the care of the invalid, Margaret's hands were full. The doctor had said that Job might be with her in his present condition for years, or he might be smitten again without warning, and pass in a few hours. His speech had not come back, beyond a few drear mutterings, intelligible to no one but Margaret. When they were alone she talked to him as a child to her doll, or as a mother to her speechless but sentient infant.

One afternoon, close upon the finish of

the cañon work, Dunsmuir sat and talked with Margaret in the door of the claim-cabin, and between them, bolstered in his chair, was that sad effigy of Job. Spring had changed everything since the day of the gray September dust-storm. The little house stood low, on the edge of a rich bottom grown up in wild grass. The willows and cottonwoods had leaves large enough to cast shadows. From the mesa, where Job's main lateral plowed along, the brown, seeded land fell away, like a matronly lap, toward the river. The wheat looked well, considering the unfavorable spring which is ever the lot of new settlers; but the orchard, planted with trees the size of walking-sticks, was needing water badly. There had been a week of hot, drying winds, most untimely; snow was going fast on the mountains, and the river tumbled by the vivid meadow-grass in a yellow, seething flood.

Dunsmuir praised Margaret's management, and promised her a 'lot of stuff' for her garden another year. He had grown used to Job's nonentity, and talked across him, cheerfully, as if his chair had been vacant. But Margaret noted every subtle change in the face of her invalid, and when-

ever a wan, unrestful look of his sought her, she had always some comforting expedient in reserve.

"I 'm charged to tell you," said Dunsmuir, "that we can never do without you in these preparations for the great day. Dolly is in a dozen quandaries, and has no one but men to advise with, and the cooking will all 'gang agley' without Margaret to superintend; so what 's to be done? Cannot we fit up one of the wagons as an ambulance for Job, and move you both, stick an' stow, up to the house till this mummery is over? Job must see the head-works before the gates are shut. Eh, Job?"

"Na, na; it 's not to be thought on," Margaret interposed.

"Well, then, you must find us some trusty woman with a good skill at the cooking. It is far too much to put upon Jenny and a young mistress like Dolly."

Dunsmuir often fell into Margaret's way of speaking, in talking with her since her trouble; it was the expression of his nearness. Every shade of misconception had passed from between them; there was even a greater ease and kindness in Dunsmuir's manner. He was more himself with them

at the cabin than with any who knew him, even his daughter. And he was more outspoken with Margaret about his own affairs than he had been while she was one of his household; for now he was freed from her anxious feminine oversight, and from the pressure of one-sided obligations.

"I 'll may be no ken the new ways o' the house," said Margaret, ignoring the possibility of another woman, "with a' this cum'ersome work going forrit, and the look of everything changed. I hear ye have built a new stable."

"Nothing of the sort; we have built a bridge from the house to the old stable, to save pulling and hauling across the gulch. There is nothing changed about the house, and the ways are the same ye have known going on for twenty years. Why, Job will be blithe to spare you for a day, with a neighbor body to wait upon him. It 's not the work, — we can get hands enough, — it is a head that is wanting. There 'll be twenty people to luncheon at the house, and tables in the tents for the crowd. Dolly, the child, knows nothing how to provide for such a raff of folk, and my way is a man's way. She would know every detail before-

hand, and she is thrifty, and grudges the waste that comes of loose providing."

"Gude save us! and is a' that to come out of the family?"

Dunsmuir chuckled over Margaret's prudential alarm. He teased her awhile about the expenses of the forthcoming entertainment, and then confessed it was the company's affair.

"But we must do our part, if only for pride's sake."

"And do ye think, now, that it 's worth while?" she shrewdly asked.

"Why, if advertising be worth while — it is an advertisement of the canal. The manager knows his business. The trouble is, he thinks he knows mine. The water is to be backed up against the dam to make a show for the people, when the lake should be a month, at least, filling up. But the powers have ordained that we celebrate."

"And what will they have to their programme?"

"It will be a Fourth of July, wanting the powder. The head-works are the 'grand stand' for the principal guests and the speaking. There will be plenty of bunting, and brandy and soda; and the city band

will be there; and Price Norrisson will address the meeting. And the ladies will cast their bouquets into the canal bed, as the water is turned in, — a marriage, you see, of the river and the ditch, — and my poor girl is to cast the first one" —

"Eh, sirs! an' will ye allow that, an' before a' that crowd o' strange folk?"

"Well, if the thing must be done, I know no other lady who could be bridesmaid to the ditch, unless it's yourself, Margaret. You might do it to spare Dolly; though, as a fact, I think the poor child is pleased. She takes it all in good faith, as she should. It's only here by ourselves that I dare to sit among the scorners. But the cream of the joke will be Norrisson's oration. He is to father the whole concern. He will give us the progress of Irrigation (with a capital I) in this region, with a history of our own canal, for the benefit of the press reporters. He will spread it from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and by the next steamer to the other side; but there 'll be a searching of hearts in the audience, I 'm thinking. There are a few of us left who could give him points to help him out with his tale. Here, God pity us! is a weary page of it." Dunsmuir

laid his hand on Job's nerveless right arm. "Tons and tons of rock lie bedded in the river that this white, bloodless hand sent smoking down the glen side. Ay, if we had the rock and the stone piled in one heap that Job has moved off the canal line, it would build him a cairn fit for a chieftain's monument. Job's hand should have been the first to raise the head-gates; but now the force has gone out of it, and I must take hold beside Norrisson."

"Eh, sirs!" cried Margaret, again, all her partisan blood uprising. "And is that, do you think, as it should be, now?"

"It is as it is," said Dunsmuir. "I may let go, if I choose to sulk in public, but Norrisson's fist will remain; it has a healthy grip upon most things. Have you not learned that in this country the engineer is the hireling, not the counselor? It 's money that builds here, not brains and education. Norrisson will be the great man of the day. And 'we that strove mightily shall eat and drink as friends.' But you will come, Margaret, and take a glass with me in silence to the memories we two are left to keep?"

"Na, na; I 'll drink nae glasses," said Margaret, wiping away a quiet tear that

started as she spoke. "Let them eat and drink as maun, to show their gude wull. There 's nae need o' that amang friends. But I will come for a day before the day, and gi' ye what help I can."

"And will you not come and look on at the feasting? You will never have seen so many people together since you came to the cañon."

"Na; a feast is no a feast to me wi'out my auld man is there."

"You speak like yourself," said Dunsmuir. "Well, good-by to you both — honest friends as man ever had in this world. Do you think he follows me, Margaret?" Dunsmuir laid his hand affectionately on Job's as he spoke, and looked long, with a sorrowful questioning, into the dumb-stricken countenance.

"He is there, the same as ever," said Margaret.

"Yes; he is there," said Dunsmuir. "Nor more estranged from us than we, that can speak, from one another. There are bonds and bonds, Margaret, woman; and where is the soul clothed in flesh, and the desires of the flesh, that can call itself free? Job, I 'm thinking, is nearer his freedom than any of us."

XX.

THE WATERS GATHER.

"LOOK out for the water at the ranch to-morrow evening, Margaret."

"Gude save us! will it be a' that while on the road?"

"It will, and longer if I had my way of it."

"Are ye afeard the banks will not be strong enough to tak' the first flood o' 't?" Margaret asked in an anxious whisper. She was already in her place beside the driver on the single seat of the buckboard, having characteristically refused to stay to dinner, or to have dinner earlier, after working like three women since nine o'clock on that toilsome day before the day.

Dunsmuir smiled at her precautionary whisper, not to spread her fears.

"There is no first flood in a new canal, woman. It 's plain ye were not bred in a canal country. The water creeps in like a baby taking its first steps. It must walk before it can run."

"Fair fa' its steps, then," Margaret ejaculated. "But, sirs! it is a fearsome business." She turned her reddened, earnest countenance upon Dunsmuir as he stood smiling, with his foot on the fore wheel, hindering her departure.

"What is there fearsome about it? It is an old, respectable business as any on the face of the earth. You may read of its works in your Bible."

"I have read how the Lord proved Moses at the waters of Meribah," said Margaret, solemnly, "for that he smote, and sanctified Him not before the people. And do ye mind what was the judgment? 'Yet shalt thou see the land before thee, but thou shalt not go thither into that land which I give to the children of Israel.'"

"Ye are grand at the Scripture, Margaret, but I can cap your judgments with the promise that stands fair for all irrigators of the desert. 'He that watereth shall be watered also himself.' We make no pretense to be leaders, or lawgivers, or guides to the people in their wanderings."

"Ah, ye are daffin' when ye had far better be prayin'. It disna set wi' my way of thinkin', sic a day o' muckle eatin' an'

drinkin', wantin' the thanks due to the giver of a' things. There 's a mony mair warnin's than promises in the Scripture set over against that word water. The Lord Almighty makes it his boast that he holds them in his hand. Do ye mind how he answered Job out o' the whirlwind, speerin' whaur was he when the sea brak' forth an' the clouds were its swaddlin' band? He that presumes to know the ordinances of Heaven; who brak's the seal o' the auld, ancient, fearsome waters, to turn them from their given course — he 'll need to mind!"

"Well, can't you give us a better word than that for the last one?" Dunsmuir held out his hand. To his surprise, Margaret was speechless. She wiped her hand hastily on her apron, and gave his a hard, warm squeeze, and then broke down completely.

It was partly the sight of the cañon as she was leaving it, at the hour of its most solemn beauty; for the place was home to her. But Margaret had also a superstitious fear of success, coming to one so long out of touch with fortune, to one who claimed so much, and so proudly, in the name of his work.

Dolly was late for dinner that evening. "I have something to do to my dress," she whispered to her father aside. "Do you mind that it is a little frock of mamma's?"

"Why should I mind? Poor child, with no mother's hands to make her fine!" Dunsmuir drew her to him, pressing her head close to his breast. "Dolly, if ever any one should come, asking questions of you — be slow, be slow to answer him! Remember, a woman's no may be changed to yes; but her yes should be yes forever. They say he gives twice who gives quickly; it is not so with all giving. A man does not prize a woman's readiness."

"Father!" Dolly exclaimed, looking hurt and frightened.

"I 'm not saying that you have been — I 'm saying nothing; but for God's sake, know your mind. Tell him no, whoever he may be; tell him no, and no, for as long as you can say it!"

Dunsmuir and Philip sat down to dinner together in silence. At Dolly's empty place there lay a sumptuous bouquet of hothouse roses, with a gentleman's card attached.

"From my father," Philip replied, to the other's questioning look.

"Ay," said Dunsmuir, grimly. "And are those the flowers she is to fling at the feet of the waters to-morrow? I should have given her a bunch of sage and sunflowers, or a handful of wild syringa from the rocks; but your father's gifts always have a trade value. There 'll be as much as ten dollars' worth of roses in that bunch, I dare say?"

"Expense is nothing to us now," said Philip, forcing a smile. "The work is done."

"Yes, the work is done; not as we meant, but as we could, which is the way of most men's working. The work as I planned it remains for some other man to do."

"I was not thinking of the work," said Philip; "the best thing about it, to me, is that it is finished. And now, may I have your leave to speak to Dolly?"

"What is your hurry, man? The child has enough to think of with this silly celebration on her hands. Leave her in peace till the house is empty, and the ditch is full," he added, with his melancholy smile, in which Philip felt the touch of foreboding.

"If my speaking is to be only another

trouble to Dolly, for heaven's sake, let me speak and have done with it!"

"Speak then; but remember, —

"'He that bends to himself a joy
Doth the wingèd life destroy.'

Be sure that what you grasp at is meant for you and for no other, else you will see your bonny rosebud wither in your hand."

Dunsmuir pushed back his chair, and began walking up and down the room excitedly, saying, in his deepest voice: "God knows I have nothing to wish for but my child's happiness, yet I cannot wish you success. You 'll get it, I know that well enough; but why should a man win his wife so easily? It 's not the way with other winnings. And what will her yes be worth — a child, who has seen no one but yourself?"

"I will take her yes and be thankful, if I can get it," Philip murmured. "The old way is good enough for me."

Dolly came in, radiant as Night, in a gauzy dress of black that left her white throat bare above the round neck of the corsage. She was too conscious of her first toilet to help smiling, her color mounting high. Philip rose with a beating heart, and

placed her chair; but her father looked at her strangely.

"Is that your dress for to-morrow?" he asked.

"It is the one I spoke to you about. Is there anything wrong with it?"

"'Black is for mourning;' you cannot wear black for the Marriage of the Ditch."

Dolly was greatly disappointed. A vision of herself in one of her old home-made frocks, before all that staring crowd at the head-gates, before the town ladies and the magnates from a distance, preoccupied her miserably.

"There 's no gainsaying a woman on a question of her clothes," said Dunsmuir. "Come, eat your dinner, and don't sit there so big-eyed! Look at the grand bouquet the manager sends to the Lady of the Big Ditch."

Dunsmuir ate nothing himself; he was jerky and artificial in his talk. The others made no attempt to talk at all.

"If you want me," said Dunsmuir, rising and looking at Philip, "you will find me at the dam. The lake is filling fast; I shall stay below till bedtime." Philip had risen and stood by his chair and Dolly leaned

forward, watching her father's face; she was startled at its paleness and fixity. "There is a strange fascination in that vesture of stone and mortar, to one who knows its history." He spoke to Philip. "Our tale of bricks is completed: it is time we gat us up out of the land of bondage. Now what 's the word for to-morrow? — let us see." He stopped by the door, in passing out, and tore a leaf from the calendar. In the waning light he stooped and read aloud: —

> "'God is not dumb that He should speak no more:
> If I have wanderings in the wilderness,
> And find not Sinai, 't is my soul is poor.'

'And find not Sinai,'" he repeated, smiling at Philip. "Did I not tell you, it is time we gat us up?"

"What does he mean by the 'land of bondage'?" whispered Dolly as the door closed.

"His long waiting, perhaps," Philip answered, though he knew well what Dunsmuir meant.

The breeze from the river parted the light curtains on the tinkling rods; shattered gleams struck here and there about the darkening room. Moments remembered and

words spoken between them revived with sudden intensity of meaning. He was free to speak now, but his heart was too full.

"Give me just a moment on the grass by the east windows?" he entreated, as if there were scarce hope of such a boon.

Their very nearness troubled the currents between them, and kept them apart. Outside, the waters were climbing silently behind the dam — faster for the heavy rains that had been falling on the mountains, augmented by the melting snows. Every inch of that tremendous watershed was casting in its drop; but below the hill, where the bar had been heard to roar on soft spring nights like this, all was ominously quiet. The lake was creeping up and up, leaning its swelling heart against the dam. A faint ripple, a stealthy sound, not to be detected without close listening, alone betrayed the gathering of those mighty incoming forces.

A new moon, as slender as a young girl's finger, beckoned in the west. Philip walked the grass impatiently; a hard excitement tightened his grasp upon his bated bliss.

"My love, my love," he whispered — "of the summer, of the autumn, of the winter; come, come and bless me, for the work is

done, and the water, the water, is climbing fast!" All the while he was hideously conscious of the water.

"Shut the gates and let her head up." This was the order which had come from the manager's office. The chief had been in a mood of desperate, savage acquiescence in any madness that might proceed from the office in town; and between the fighting captains the soldier has but his orders.

He stepped across the rose-bed, and called softly at Dolly's window, "Are you never coming?" And in that instant it was too late. There was a shout; he was wanted at the dam.

He glanced at the lake as he ran along the hill. In that last hour it had climbed a foot. It was awful: climbing, shimmering, darkling; and in its depths floated the inverted crescent, his moon of love sinking in the lake.

Dunsmuir was down by the toe of the dam, stooping far out on the edge of the sluggish remnant of water which crawled in the downstream channel. He called Philip, by name, as he had not spoken to him for months. His manner was direct, simple, responsible; he bore himself as a man in the presence of a great danger.

"For God's sake, look at that!"

Water is a very secret, subtle thing; it dissembles its sinister forces in trifling appearances which might amuse a child. The two men were staring at just a toss of bubbles discolored with mud boiling up and spreading fast from the toe of the dam. But these came from a spot just over the fault in the foundation. No more was said, but the order was given to open the scouring-gate. Philip had started up the bank toward the head works when a second eruption followed, more copious, violent, and muddier than the first.

Dunsmuir called to him: "Stop; I will go. Saddle up, and get word down the line on this side, and send a man across. *Go yourself across;* it will be a close call this side of the notch. You must save Margaret and the old man."

There was no question to each man of his duty: to the young man his orders — to ride and to save; to the chief his watch by the breaking dam.

As Philip bounded up the hill he was thinking, between heart-beats, not of the work, nor of his orders, nor even of that deathless call that now and then singles a

modest youth from the ranks, and spends him, in one wild moment, for a deed that but for some one's blundering had not needed to be done ; — he was arguing the point with himself quite simply and with great clearness : he could not go without one kiss from Dolly. There would not be time to ask her or to tell her why. If the dam should break before he gained the notch, she would know, then, why he kissed her ; if he made it, alive, there would be time enough to explain.

Dunsmuir had not been able to relieve the pressure on the dam ; within its foundations disorganization had progressed so rapidly that all its functions had ceased. Dissolution, he knew, must be near. He had timed Philip from his start. He had lost a moment above, warning Dolly not to go off the hill (no ; Philip had not counted that moment lost) ; he had lost other moments raising the camps ; he had lost time at the ford. He had half a mile to the notch, and two to the ranch, where the old man and his wife were sleeping, unconscious of all this wild work going on above.

There was one spot where the wagon road, on the other side, crossed a low ledge projecting from the foot of the last bluff, which,

with its opposite neighbor, formed the notch of the cañon. When sunset fell clear and the color lingered, a horseman crossing that step could be seen from the dam, a speck against the low light in the west. Dunsmuir walked out to the middle ; the scouring-gate was nearer the head-works. He stood, just over the spot where the trouble was advancing, and stared into the distance. It was already too dark ; he could no longer make out the ledge. He looked at the shoulder of the bluff through which the Big Cut was to have conducted the water. Against that first obstruction the wave, when it leaped, would break, and, reeling backward, overwhelm the low shore opposite. A thousand times he had watched the shock, the dizzy recoil, the thundering outward swirl of the spring floods, now magnified and uplifted to a deluge. And all that peaceful shore, with the white road hugging the bluffs, would be "turned as wax to the fire," as "clay to the seal," when the waters uprose and stamped it out of sight.

There came a third eruption, with a fearful crunching sound of smothered upheaval. Enveloped in an enormous mass of muddy water, the piles and timbers that had plugged

the foundations of the dam were forced upward; the wall of the scouring-gallery sank, and the gate fell in.

"'Lord, spare the green and take the ripe!'" Dunsmuir called aloud, from his watch on the dam. He stood about the middle when the heart of it burst, and the lake went out in one vast arc of solid water. The better part of the work remained, as a bridge, spanning the awful rupture. On that bridge he was seen one instant and then he was gone. Even as the swollen waters rent their imperfect vesture of stone and mortar, so his soul cast off its mortal lendings: the man and his work were one.

In twenty minutes from the bursting of the dam the lake was empty. And as the swollen river thrashed and sobbed and rocked itself to rest in its old channel again, that small, cold laugh was heard, distinctly syllabled, in the echo of the mournful wave that broke beneath the ruined dam.

XXI.

DUNSMUIR'S DAM.

Dolly walked the empty house, from room to room, under festal doorways hung with flags and silly emblems, between mantels banked with flowers, breathing the sickly scent of wilted wild syringa, crowded into pots in the cold, drafty fireplaces. It was a chill spring morning, but no one had thought to build a fire. The house had a haggard, bedizened look — a stare of homeless expectancy. In the kitchen Jenny was setting forth breakfast for the men, hastily choosing from the heaped dainties that now were funeral baked meats. The tents, and all the camp outfit, were strewn for miles down the valley.

Word had come from below that Philip had signaled his safety, but could not cross, as all the boats were loose, and the ford was roaring. But toward evening he came, bringing Margaret with him; and Job's wife was a widow. They had snatched the old man

in his blankets and carried him, half insensible, to the mesa, when the wave went down. He had not survived the shock and the exposure, but passed in the night, Margaret watching by him alone, while Philip went on, down the submerged valley, carrying assistance to the fleeing settlers.

No lives were lost but those two most closely bound up in the history of the work: but in the track of the wave fields were buried, and houses were gutted, or swept away; and a heavy tale of damages piled up against the company, besides the immediate claims on private benevolence.

It was not likely that Dunsmuir's dam would ever be forgotten. Dolly's pride was as low as the dam; but her sympathies had spread like the waters. She was sister to all who owed to them their losses. Never was she to speak of the work again without remembering that it had failed; never to boast the benefits of her father's great scheme without recalling the wave of destruction that went before. And the promise that was given in that hour of grief and humiliation Philip might safely trust, and with his contrite joy began the work of reparation.

Hardly had the cañon household torn down its garlands and buried its dead, when Norrisson's telegrams were signaling, east, west, and south, for men and materials for the rebuilding of the dam. And Philip's orders were to receive the stuff, and straightway to reorganize the work. When the new chief (made so by his father's command, with no words wasted) went to the manager to talk over the plan for the foundation, Norrisson replied: —

"Excavate! Get down to that rock if you sink to hell. *This is Dunsmuir's dam.*" And never did Philip hear another word of acknowledgment from his father's lips. Norrisson's way was not the way of talk.

"But the high water," Philip objected.

"Turn the river over the waste-weir."

"But, great heaven, the cost!"

"I 'll take care of the cost. If the Englishmen are going to lie down, let them be quick about it; I can take my bonds elsewhere. *I* walked the floor on that first scheme, now it 's their turn. If they want this thing, they 'll have to pay first and talk afterward."

In that crisis Philip came to know his father. The man was simply a force, devoid

of memory, of conscience, or of ruth. He was nothing hampered by the past nor daunted by the future. He saw only the hole in the dam, which he swore should be stopped before the crops withered.

"You keep your hand on the throttle, and I 'll shove in the coal," he said. And Philip guided, and his father fed the fires of the work. Men, teams, powder, a costly electric plant, timber, stone, mortar, and cement, were hurled into the cañon, as fuel for those fires that burned by day and by night, without one hour's cessation, till the hole in the dam was stopped — and the crops were not yet withered. And Norrisson's exultation passed all bounds: it was the measure of his previous unspoken chagrin.

"Perhaps you thought you were working up here before," he bragged to Dunsmuir's ex-assistant. "Now you know what *I* mean by work. I should have let Dunsmuir go ahead with his own plan in the first place, if *I* could have driven the work; but he would n't let me drive, and he would n't drive himself. If he had been in charge here now, he 'd have refused to do anything till the river went down; and then our stock would have been as low as the river. No,

sir; an Englishman does n't know the meaning of the word time."

Having done the work, and satisfied his pride, and boasted like the son of Tydeus, he proceeded to do honor to the vanquished dead. Out of his own pocket, as though the expense were naught (how that pocket was filled has been hinted, but the thing could not be sworn to), he superadded to the parapet of the dam a tier of open arches, on each side of the roadway from the headworks, or "poise," to the waste-weir. At the spot where Dunsmuir handed in his resignation, one arch was raised above the others and converted into a niche, wherein was placed a bronze mural tablet with a sculptured seat beneath. He did not meddle here with the design, nor did he build in haste, for he was not "placing" this work; it was his present to posterity, conceived in a spirit of reparation as extravagant as his pride.

While this demonstration was going forward in honor of her father, Dolly offered not a word. Philip understood well her silence; he felt, with her, the insolence of his father's complacent tribute to the man he had first broken and then bought. He also understood that she endured for the

sake of the living what she would have rejected for the dead. Neither could he protest; and this strange offering of mixed motives added its significance to the story of the ditch.

"Fifty years from now it will not matter," Philip comforted himself. Yes; in less than fifty years, in less than five. The great dam with its crown of sculptured arches stood there as solid as the hills, the lake above, the spreading waters below telling its own story. No one supplied the merciful omissions or enforced the lesson. Jacob who tempted, Esau who sold, for that he was weary and faint with fasting long afield — the children of these very human fathers were human also; they loved, and humble love forgave what proud principle refused to condone. As for their world, it was busy gathering the new wealth which the waters had sown; it had no time to think who built the ditch or how. There was the water.

On a fair spring evening, when the lake holds the glory of the sky reflected in its depths, an old woman may sometimes be seen, seated sidewise in the niche, supporting on her ample knee a young child who is just beginning to stand alone. He has bright

hair and wonderful hazel-gray eyes. With his finger he follows the raised letters of the inscription; and the pair might well have been in the sculptor's mind when he designed the niche: Margaret, keeper of the past, and Philip's child, co-heir and co-worker in the future.

And the words the boy will one day read are these: —

TO THE MEMORY OF
ROBERT DUNSMUIR, M. INST. C. E.,
WHO DESIGNED
THESE WORKS FOR IRRIGATION,
1874–1891.

I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water.

But the text from which Margaret reads the story of the ditch, the one she will rather teach the boy to read it by, is this: —

So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

The ideal scheme is ever beckoning from the West; but the scheme with an ideal rec-

ord is yet to find — the scheme that shall breed no murmurers, and see no recreants; that shall avoid envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; that shall fulfill its promises, and pay its debts, and remember its friends, and keep itself unspotted from the world. Over the graves of the dead, and over the hearts of the living, presses the cruel expansion of our country's material progress: the prophets are confounded, the promise withdrawn, the people imagine a vain thing. Men shall go down, the deed arrives; not unimpeachable, as the first proud word went forth, but mishandled, shorn, and stained with obloquy, and dragged through crushing strains. And those that are with it in its latter days are not those who set out in the beginning. And victory, if it come, shall border hard upon defeat.

Boston Public Library
Central Library, Copley Square

Division of
Reference and Research Services

The Date Due Card in the pocket indicates the date on or before which this book should be returned to the Library.

Please do not remove cards from this pocket.

Boston Public Library
3 9999 05418 9467